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MEMOIRS
OF THE
REIGN OF GEORGE III.
FROM
HIS ACCESSION,
TO
THE PEACE OF AMIENS.

BY WILLIAM BELSHAM.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

BENEFICIO QUAM METU OBLIGARE HOMINES MALIT; EXTERASQUE GENTES FIDE
AC SOCIETATE JUNCTAS HABERE, QUAM TRISTI SUBJECTAS SERVITIO.

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1808.

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Debates in Parliament, 1793. Correspondence with M. Chauvelin laid before the two Houses. Message from the King accompanying the Papers. Proceedings on the Motion for an Address to the Throne. Speeches of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Whitbread, and Mr. Fox. Address carried. Second Message from the King, announcing the French Declaration of War. Address moved by Mr. Pitt. Amendment proposed by Mr. Fox—Opposed by Mr. Burke—Supported by Mr. Sheridan. Amendment negatived by the House. Debates in the House of Peers. Resolutions moved by Mr. Fox. Address moved by Mr. Grey. Remarkable Motion of Mr. Sheridan. Traitorous Correspondence Bill. Adjournment of Parliament. State of Affairs on the Continent. General Dumouriez enters Holland. Breda surrenders—also Klundert and Gertruydenburg. Resolute Defence of Williamstadt. Successes of General Clairfait and the Prince of Cobourg. Siege of Maestricht raised. French

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evacuate Holland. Retreat of the French from the Maese. Battle of Neerwinden. Defection of Dumouriez. Capture of the French Commissioners. Judicious Manifesto of the Prince of Cobourg. His Plan of Policy superseded. Dangerous Situation of France. Elation of the Court of London. Sanguinary Memorial of Lord Auckland. The Doctrines of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance preached before the House of Peers by Bishop Horsley. Heroic Exertions and Death of General Dampierre. Duke of York Commander in Chief of the English and auxiliary Troops on the Continent. Military Transactions in concert with the Prince of Cobourg. Siege and Capture of Valenciennes—also of Condé, Mentz, and Quesnoy. Fatal Separation of the Duke of York from the Austrians. Brilliant Action at Lincelles. Duke of York forms the Siege of Dunkirk. Ineffectual Overture of France for Peace. Treaty with Sardinia. Unparalleled Number of Bankruptcies in London. Commercial Credit restored. Parliamentary Investigation of Lord Auckland's Memorial. Charter of the East-India Company prolonged. Motion for a Reform in the Representation by Mr. Grey. Parliament prorogued. Affairs of Ireland. Concessions made to the Catholics—Opposed by the Lord-Chancellor Fitzgibbon. Extraordinary Prosecutions for Sedition in Scotland. Tyrannical Sentence of Transportation passed on Muir, Gerald, Skirving, Margatrot, and Palmer. French rise EN MASSE. Duke of York totally defeated at Dunkirk. Barbarous Executions of the Generals Houchard and Custine. Prince of Cobourg compelled to repass the Sambre. Werwick, Menin, and Furnes, captured by the French. Operations on the Rhine. Retreat of the Austrian and Prussian Armies. Siege of Landau raised. Rebellion in La Vendée suppressed. Naval Armament returns to Portsmouth. Proceedings of the Convention. Bold Machinations of the Jacobines. Revolutionary Tribunal established. Fall of the Brissotines. Internal Commotions in France.

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UPON the very same day that France declared war against Great Britain, the British parliament was engaged in discussing a message from the king, stating, “That his majesty had caused to be laid before them copies of several papers which had passed between M. Chauvelin and the minister for foreign affairs, and of the order of departure transmitted to M. Chauvelin. And his majesty moreover declared, that in the present situation of affairs he thought it indispensable to make a further augmentation of his forces by sea and land, for maintaining the rights of his own dominions, for supporting his allies, and for opposing views of aggrandisement and ambition on the part of France, at all times dangerous to the interests of Europe, but peculiarly so when connected with the propagation of prin-

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parliament.

Correspondence with M. Chauvelin laid before the two houses.

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On this occasion Mr. Pitt, who had now resumed his seat in parliament, made an eloquent harangue, evidently calculated to prepare the minds of his auditors for war, and to inflame the passions of the house to the highest pitch. Adverting, at the commencement of his speech, to the melancholy catastrophe which had just taken place in France, he represented it in terms of the most high-flown rhetorical exaggeration, "as an event so full of grief and horror, that he wished it were possible to tear it from their memories, and expunge it from the page of history;—but that event was unfortunately passed, and the present age must be for ever contaminated with the guilt and ignominy of having witnessed it. In this dreadful transaction they saw concentrated the effect of those principles, pushed to their utmost extent, which set out with dissolving all the bonds by which society was held together—principles established in opposition to every law human and divine, and which, presumptuously relying on the authority of wild and delusive theories, rejected all the advantages of the wisdom and experience of former ages, and even the sacred instructions of Revelation." After indulging himself long in this sort of de-

clamation, Mr. Pitt adverted to the papers before the house. "During the whole summer (he affirmed), while France had been engaged in the war with Austria and Prussia, his majesty had in no shape departed from the neutrality which he had engaged to observe. But what had been the conduct of the French? The first instance of their success in Savoy had been sufficient to demonstrate the insincerity of their assurances, and to unfold the plan of their ambition. They had immediately resolved to annex it for ever to their dominions. That they might not leave any doubt of their intentions, by a formal decree they had stated their plan of overturning every government; threatening destruction to all who refused that fraternisation, which, by a horrid mockery, they pretended to offer. They had rendered the Netherlands a province, in substance as well as in name, to France; and they had shewn a disposition to add to its territory every country which should be so unfortunate as to experience the force of its arms; for the wild and destructive ambition of the present rulers in France was limited only by their power. Some pretended explanations had indeed been given of the decree of the 19th of November; but, as had been already stated by the noble secretary of state, they contained only

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an avowal and a repetition of the offence. The whole of their language, institutions, and conduct, had been directed to the subversion of every government. To monarchy particularly they had testified the most violent and decided enmity: the bloody sentence, executed by the hand of the assassin against their late monarch, was passed against the sovereigns of all countries. No political association in this kingdom, however contemptible, had sent addresses containing sentiments of sedition and treason to their assembly, which had not been received with even a degree of theatrical extravagance, and cherished with all the enthusiasm of congenial feeling.—In relation to the violated rights of his majesty and his allies, involved in the question relative to the Scheld, he asserted the exclusive claim of the Dutch to the navigation of that river, guarantied by the most solemn treaties; to which the French, who could have no pretence to interfere in this matter but in the assumed character of sovereigns of the Low Countries, or arbiters of Europe, opposed certain visionary theoretic principles, such as destroyed the force of all positive obligations, though they had repeatedly pledged themselves to the observance of all the subsisting treaties. He granted that the Dutch had made no formal requisition of

support in the actual circumstances, contenting themselves with protesting against the invasion of their rights; but, because they were timid, were we to leave them exposed to the certain ruin that awaited them?—The French had stated that they would evacuate the Netherlands at the conclusion of the war. Upon a promise so illusory there could not be placed the smallest dependence; and they had made no apology for the manner in which they had received seditious addresses from this country. These addresses they received as expressive of the sentiments of the people of Great Britain, the great majority of whom, he was happy to say, detested the principles contained in them. Thus in all those three assurances which they had given—1st, Of their intention to reject any system of aggrandisement; 2dly, To abstain from all interference in the government of any neutral country; and 3dly, To respect the rights of his majesty and his allies; they had entirely failed, and on every point completely reversed that plan of conduct which they had so solemnly pledged themselves to adopt. In the paper transmitted by the executive council, they had given their *ultimatum*; so that we must either accept the satisfaction they offer, or a war must be the consequence. As to the time, the precise moment,

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he should not pretend to fix it. A satisfactory explanation would not even now be refused; but he should deceive them if he should say that he thought any such explanation would be given, or that a war could be avoided." He then moved an address of thanks to his majesty in the usual form.

A most animated debate ensued. Mr. Whitbread "denied that the barbarities imputed to France were the necessary consequences of the French revolution, or of republican principles. To the conduct of the powers combined against the liberties of France, to the sanguinary manifestoes of the duke of Brunswick, might they be, without hesitation, ascribed. These manifestoes bore rather the stamp and character of those Gothic and Scythian invaders, with whom to conquer and to destroy were the same, than of the enlightened spirit of the eighteenth century. They breathed the fury of an Attila, whose emphatical boast, as recorded by a celebrated historian, was—'Where Attila's horse sets his foot, the grass never grows.' The balance of power was said to be endangered by the aggrandisement of France; but were any apprehensions entertained on this subject when France was over-run by the arms of Prussia and Austria? Were any symptoms of uneasiness appar-

ent when the empress of Russia, in the course of the last summer, took possession of Poland? But the principles of France were said to enhance, if not to constitute, the danger. Surely the principles of despotism, propagated by the sword, were not less dangerous than those of licentiousness. To demand that the French troops should evacuate their conquests, in order to pave the way to negotiation with us, was the height of insolence.—A hard necessity, indeed, should he conceive it, for Great Britain to be forced into a war to maintain for the benefit of the Dutch the exclusive navigation of the Scheld; for the exclusive navigation of that river had been established by force, and consented to by weakness. At least we had a right to expect some precise requisition of the Dutch for the assistance stipulated by treaty; but the minister acknowledged that no such demand had been made. On the contrary, in a proclamation issued by the States General so late as the 10th of January last, they expressly declare themselves to be *at peace*, in consequence of the strict neutrality they had observed. The decree of November he would not defend, but the explanation of it was such as to take away all serious apprehensions of injury designed to this country. Having gone through the matter contained

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in the papers, Mr. Whitbread declared he could find no justification of the conduct of administration. He thought the maintenance of peace in the power of the ministry, in perfect consistency with the honor, dignity, and interests, of this country; but their conduct and words denoted war. He had still, however, a hope of peace remaining. That hope was founded on the knowledge he had of the character of his majesty's present servants. He knew that they had the faculty of enlarging or reducing objects precisely to the form in which they wished to consider them:—that at one time the fortress of Oczakow had deranged the balance of power in Europe; at another the whole kingdom of Poland had been thrown in without making a vibration in their political beam. He knew that they had never advanced too far to recede; that they had never threatened too much to retreat. The versatility and weakness of their counsels, though it inspired this hope, made it nevertheless, he confessed, a faint and desperate one; and he concluded with saying he could not give his assent to the address."

Mr. Fox commenced a very energetic speech by complaining of the gross misrepresentations and misconstructions of what he and those who thought with him had spoken during the course

of the present session. They were calumniated as partisans of France, and as the worst enemies of the country. This only served to shew that they were engaged in a service of danger as well as honor; and if he concealed his sentiments, or deserted his station, from any motive of intimidation, he should betray his trust, and degrade his character*.

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Mr. Fox allowed that the trial and execution of the French monarch were acts of the grossest inhumanity and injustice. But the invariable maxim of policy was, that crimes perpetrated in one independent state were not cognisable in another. Had we not treated, and even formed alliances, with Portugal and with Spain at the very time when those kingdoms were disgraced and polluted by the most barbarous acts of superstition and cruelty—of racks, torture, and fire, under the abominable tyranny of the Inquisition? Much of the enormities committed by France had been with great probability ascribed to the at-

* The high popularity of Mr. Pitt at this crisis, and the extreme unpopularity, resentment, and even national rage, displayed against Mr. Fox, (for nations are no less subject to paroxysms of passion than individuals,) recall to recollection a famous anecdote of antiquity. "The Athenians," said Demosthenes to Phocion, "will in some fit of phrenzy put you to death."—"And you," replied Phocion, "should they recover their senses."

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tack of the combined powers. This, however, he would neither urge as an excuse nor as a palliation; but he would aver that a combination more dangerous to the tranquillity of Europe, and the liberties of mankind, had never been formed. It had been said that Austria was not the aggressor in the war with France. Had those who said so seen the declaration of Pillnitz? Let them look at that declaration, take the golden rule of putting themselves in the situation of the French, and then pronounce upon the question of aggression.—He would not go over the atrocious manifestoes that preceded or followed the march of the combined armies. There was not a man in the house, or at least but one, who would attempt to defend them. But these it seemed were not to be executed—he hoped they were not; but the only security he knew of was, that those who issued them had not the means. Mr. Fox stated the grounds of the war to be three—The opening of the Scheld; the decree of November 19; and the danger to Europe from the progress of the French arms. As to the *first*, ministers did not, and could not, state that the Dutch had called upon us to fulfil the terms of our alliance. The plain truth was, that to force the Dutch into a war at so much

peril to them, which they saw and dreaded, was not to fulfil but to abuse the treaty; and the conduct of ministers, as to this ground of complaint, was wholly disingenuous. *Secondly*, The decree of the 19th of November he regarded as an insult, and the explanation of the executive council as no adequate satisfaction. But the explanation, imperfect as it was, shewed that the French were not disposed to insist upon that decree, and that they were inclined to peace. It was surely the extreme of arrogance to complain of insult without deigning to state the nature of the reparation required. When it was said we must have *security*, we ought at least to declare what that word was meant to import. *Thirdly*, With respect to the danger of Europe and the balance of power; we had seen the entire conquest of Poland, and the invasion of France, with such marked indifference, that it would be difficult now to take it up with the grace of sincerity. For satisfaction upon this point we had demanded no less than the immediate withdrawment of the French troops from the Austrian Netherlands. Were we then come to so high pitch of insolence as to say to France—‘ You have conquered a part of an enemy’s territory who made war upon you. We would not interfere, at your request

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to mediate a peace, but we now require you to abandon the advantages you have gained, while he is preparing to attack you anew?' Was this the neutrality we meant to hold out to France—'If you are invaded and beaten we will be quiet spectators; but if you defeat your enemy, if you enter his territory, we will declare war against you?' That the invasion of the Netherlands ought to alarm us, if the result of that invasion were to make the country an appendage to France, there could be no doubt. The French had promised to evacuate the country at the conclusion of the war: Was this naked promise sufficient? Certainly not. But it was for us to state candidly and explicitly the security which would be deemed sufficient. What security would they be able to give us after a war which they could not give now? Was it clear that they would refuse that security, if we would condescend to propose it to them in intelligible terms?

But all these grounds of hostility against France, Mr. Fox said, differed totally from the avowed object of the combined armies, our eventual allies in this war; which was no less than the destruction of the republican government of France recently established. To this, then, we came at last—that we were ashamed to own engaging to aid the restoration of de-

spotism, and collusively sought pretext in the Scheld and the Netherlands. In all decisions on peace or war, it was important to consider what we might lose and what we could gain. Extension of territory was neither expected nor eligible. On the other hand, would any man say that the events of war might not, with too great probability, produce a change in the internal state of Holland, and the political situation of the stadtholder, too afflicting to anticipate? Was the state of Ireland such as to make war desirable? This was said to be a subject too delicate to touch upon; but he approved not of that delicacy which taught men to shut their eyes to danger. The state of Ireland was indeed alarming, the gross misconduct of administration having brought the government and legislature into contempt in the eyes of the people. He hoped the plan to be pursued would be conciliatory; that concession to the claims of the people would be deemed wisdom; and the time of danger, contrary to the maxims of policy hitherto adopted, the fit time for reform.—After a most able and eloquent, though unavailing, speech from this truly great and illustrious statesman, the question was put, and the address carried without a division.

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A very few days subsequent to this debate,

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Message
from the
king an-
nouncing
the French
declaration
of war.

the intelligence was received that France had declared war against Great Britain and Holland; and on the 11th of February, 1793, a royal message was delivered to the two houses of parliament, announcing, "That the assembly now exercising the powers of government in France have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations, and of the most positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most *groundless pretences*, actually declared war against his majesty and the United Provinces. Under the circumstances of this *wanton and unprovoked aggression* his majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the *honor of his crown*, and to vindicate the *rights of his people*. And his majesty relies with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the house of commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people, in prosecuting a *just and necessary war*; and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the progress of *a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations*, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice. In a cause of such general concern

his majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with his majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of *anarchy and confusion*, and in contributing to the *security and tranquillity of Europe.*"

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Such is the famous message, upon the peculiar phrases contained in which, the changes have so long been rung with so much noise and so little meaning. Upon this occasion Mr. Pitt contented himself with examining the several articles of the French declaration; and he concluded with asserting, that he found in it nothing but pretexts and allegations too weak to require refutation. "We had (he said) in every instance observed the strictest neutrality with respect to France. We had pushed to its utmost extent the system of temperance and moderation. We had waited to the last moment for satisfactory explanation." He then moved the address to the throne.

Proceedings
on the motions for an
address to
the throne.

Mr. Fox expressed his astonishment that the minister should pretend to have acted on a system of temperance and moderation, when every conciliatory proposition on the part of the French had been disdainfully rejected. Every step on our part seemed to indicate a desire to break with France. To have continued earl

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Gower at Paris after the event of the 10th of August, would have implied no recognition of the validity of the government which succeeded to the monarchy, nor approbation of their proceedings: and it was certainly more eligible to treat in a direct than an indirect mode, with those who exercised the powers of government. As the prohibition of exporting corn to France, when it was allowed to other countries, was a positive infraction of the subsisting treaty; and the order received by M. Chauvelin to depart the kingdom was an act of open hostility on our part; he could not allow the declaration of war to be an unprovoked aggression on that of France. He moved, therefore, a suitable amendment to the proposed address.

Mr. Burke pronounced a vehement Philippic, affording a melancholy contrast to the speeches of his better days. Among other extravagances, he took upon him to affirm, "that the members of opposition had no right to demand from ministers the avowal of any specific object as necessary to the justification of the war. For his part, he had never heard or read of any such principle in theory, or of any such avowal in practice. The first question he conceived to be, whether there was just cause or foundation for the war? The second, how it should be carried on to the greatest effect?—In

no instance whatever had any power, at the commencement of a war, declared what the object of it was. It was contrary to the policy of this and every other country: it was never heard of*. No man, he declared, had a more lively sense of the evils of war than himself. A war with France, in present circumstances, must be terrible; but peace much more so. A na-

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* Notwithstanding the amazing effrontery of this assertion, it is an incontrovertible historical fact that the present is the only war since the Revolution which has been entered upon without an avowed and definite object. Nothing analogous to it has taken place in our annals since the war against Holland in 1672, the object of which was never avowed, though well known to be the subversion of the existing government, and the eventual partition, of the country. The object of the war immediately succeeding the Revolution was, to compel France to a recognition of the new settlement. Of the war of queen Anne, the restitution of the Spanish monarchy to the house of Austria. Of the war of 1718, the evacuation of the island of Sicily by Spain on the terms of the Quadruple Alliance. Of the maritime war of 1740, the renunciation by Spain of the pretended right of search in the American seas. Of the continental war, the defence of the Pragmatic Sanction. Of the war of 1755, to repel the encroachments of France upon the territorial rights of our colonies in North America. Of the American war, the establishment of the supremacy of Great Britain, and the right of taxation over the same colonies. Even the last of our wars, that with the Dutch in 1780, had a specific object, insignificant and contemptible as it confessedly was, *viz.* the exemplary punishment of the pensionary of Amsterdam, M. Van Berkel.

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tion that had abandoned all its valuable distinctions, arts, sciences, religion, law, order—every thing but the sword, was most dreadful to all countries composed of citizens who only used soldiers as a defence. He had no hesitation to pronounce, as in the Divine presence, that ministers had not precipitated the nation into a war, but were brought to it by an over-ruling necessity. He had been grieved to the soul, for four years past, that his utmost exertions were unable to produce, upon the government of the country, or in the public mind, a sense of the danger that approached them. At length the infatuation was removed,—ministers awoke to the peril that menaced; and he pledged himself, therefore, to give them his clear, steady, uniform, unequivocal, support. If any charge was to be laid to the share of ministers, it was that of too long delay; but in his early opposition to the views and proceedings of France, he was convinced that he was not accompanied by the feelings of the nation; nor was it till full-blown mischief had alarmed the people and roused the king, that the government could have had a proper support. From those men who could neither vindicate the principles nor deny the power of France, yet impeded the measures taken to secure us against that power,

he differed fundamentally and essentially in every principle of morals, in every principle of manners, sentiment, disposition, and in taste. France, he said, had been for some time in a continual series of hostile acts against this country, both internal and external. *First*, it directed its pursuits to universal empire, under the name of fraternisation, to overturn the fabric of our laws and government; *after this* it invented a new law of nations, subsidiary to that intention; *then* acted upon that law; *next* it directed the principal operations of that law to Great Britain: and, *lastly*, established a horrible tyranny within itself, chased every honest person out of it, held up temptations most seductive to the unenlightened lower order of all countries, and furnished unsolicited aid for the overthrow of their governments. The putting the king of France to death was done not as an example to France, not to extinguish the race—not to put an end to monarchy, but as a terror to monarchs, and particularly to the monarch of Great Britain. This new-created empire of theirs was only secondary to the accomplishment of their plans of shaking all governments. War with the château and peace with the cottage, was the basis of their new system. Atheism, he said, was the centre from which *rayed*

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out all their mischief and villany; and they proceeded to establish it with the sword. He readily allowed that this was the most dangerous war we were ever engaged in; that we were to contend with a set of men now inured to warfare, and led on by enthusiasm and the ardor of conquest to such a degree, that they were willing to barter arts, commerce, industry, manufactures, and civilisation itself, for the sword. The alliances we may form give, however, a good prospect of *subduing* them; whereas, were they allowed to proceed, we may singly, and in the end, become their easy prey. The right honorable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had spoken with some asperity of an intention in ministers to restore the ancient government. He would not compare that government with the government of Great Britain; but certain he was that it would be comfort and felicity compared with the tyranny at present exercised in France. Their enormities have already produced universal misery; their misery will drive them to despair; and out of that despair they will look for a remedy in the destruction of all other countries, and particularly that of Great Britain."

Posterity will judge of the distempered state of the public mind at this period, when the successive speeches uttered by this eloquent madman were received with the highest demonstra-

tions of admiration and applause,—the house unfortunately thinking themselves enlightened by his arguments, when they were only inflamed by his invectives.

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To the present harangue Mr. Sheridan made a most spirited reply. “A dread of France,” said this speaker, “ought unquestionably, as we are truly and emphatically told, to be a fundamental principle in the mind of a British statesman. No alteration in her government can change this principle, or ought to suspend this apprehension. But who was the gentleman so peculiarly tenacious of this creed?—the only man in all England who had held the directly contrary doctrine. Had he forgotten, or could that house at least have forgotten, that, in his first contemptuous revilings of the French Revolution, he had expressly corned and insulted France as a nation extinguished for ever, and blotted out of the map of Europe? The historian had merely to record—‘Gallos olim bello floruisse.’ If the consistency of the honorable gentleman could be matter of regular question in that house, he scrupled not to assert that there was scarcely an iota of his new principles to which there was not a recorded contradiction in his former professions.

“The honorable gentleman scorned to put

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the question upon so mean an issue as, whether the hostile overt-acts committed by France had been sufficiently explained and disavowed to this country : it was a war against the principles of the French government we were to engage in ; and therefore it followed, that it was to be a war to exterminate either them or their principles. This doctrine he thought both wild and detestable ; but admitting that it was right, the honorable gentleman must extend his scorn and obloquy to the minister and his adherents, as well as to the opposers of the war ; for, though they differed in their conclusion, they had discussed the grounds of the war precisely on the same principle and footing. The honorable gentleman differed equally from both : and in this view he thought it uncandid and unwarrantable in the minister to listen in silence to these inflammatory rants, and even to encourage the war-whoop of a man breathing vengeance and destruction--

—————Quo non præstantior alter
Ære ciere viros, Martemque accendere cantu.

VIRG.

But the ambition of France, and her aggressions against this country, were not, according to the honorable gentleman, the chief of her offences : religion demanded that we should

avenge her cause: atheism was avowed and professed in France. Was it not, however, notorious, that almost all the men and women of rank and fashion in France, including the far greater part of the present emigrant nobility whose piety the honorable gentleman was eager to contrast with republican infidelity, were the genuine and zealous followers of Voltaire and Rousseau? and if the lower orders were ultimately perverted, it was by their precept and example. The atheism, therefore, of the new system, as opposed to the piety of the old, was one of the weakest arguments he had yet heard in favor of this mad political and religious crusade. Mr. Sheridan observed that the honorable gentleman had never made any allowance for the novelty of that situation in which France stood after the destruction of its old arbitrary government. It was an unalterable truth that despotism degrades and depraves human nature, and renders its subjects, on the first recovery of their rights, unfit for the exercise of them. In the first wildness of liberty they would probably dash their broken chains, to the present injury of themselves, and of all who were near them. Still he feared the enemy less than our allies—For who were those allies? What had been their conduct? Could the honorable

BOOK XIX. gentleman forget his character of the Polish revolution? Who had marred that lovely prospect, and annihilated the fairest offspring of virtue and valor?—those allies who were the chosen, associated, and bosom counsellors in the future efforts of this deluded nation.”

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The amendment of Mr. Fox was, after a long and interesting discussion, negatived; and the address, as moved by the minister, carried without a division.

The debates in the house of peers during this session were too similar to those of the commons to render a minute narration of them necessary. From the great defection experienced by the Whig party, the numbers of the opposition were reduced very low indeed; but the abilities of the marquis of Lansdown, the lords Lauderdale, Moira, Guildford, &c. gave them both animation and interest. On occasion of the address moved by lord Grenville in reply to the message from the throne, the earl of Lauderdale proposed an amendment coincident with that of Mr. Fox. Lord Stanhope, who spoke on the same side, very properly called the attention of the house to the second article of the treaty of 1786, by which it is expressly declared, that in case of any subject of misunderstanding arising between the two nations, the

sending away the ambassador resident at either court should be deemed a rupture. The marquis of Lansdown supported the preceding speakers in their general arguments against the war. "Who (said the noble lord) are the aggressors—they who kept a minister, or they who dismissed him?—they who offered to explain, or they who refused to hear?—they who offered to go on and trade in amity, or they who prohibited the exportation of grain to them while it was open to the rest of the world?" The address at length passed in the affirmative, without a division.

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On the 18th of February Mr. Fox brought forward a set of resolutions, stating in clear and specific language the sentiments of the friends of peace, and the grounds of difference between ministers and the members of opposition. They were precisely as follow :

First, That it is not for the honor or interest of Great Britain to make war upon France, on account of the internal circumstances of that country, for the purpose either of suppressing or punishing any opinions and principles, however pernicious in their tendency, which may prevail there ; or of establishing among the French people any particular form of government.

Resolutions
moved by
Mr. Fox.

Secondly, That the particular complaints which have been made against the conduct of the

BOOK XIX.
1793. French government are not of a nature to justify war in the first instance, without our having attempted to obtain redress by negotiation.

Thirdly, That it appears to this house, that in the late negotiation between his majesty's ministers and the agents of the French government, the said ministers did not take such measures as were likely to procure redress, without a rupture, for the grievances of which they complained; and, particularly, that they never stated distinctly to the French government any terms and conditions, the accession to which, on the part of France, would induce his majesty to persevere in a system of neutrality.

Fourthly, that it does not appear that the tranquillity of Europe, and the rights of independent nations, which have been stated as grounds of war against France, have been attended to by his majesty's ministers in the case of Poland, in the invasion of which unhappy country, both in the last year and more recently, the most open contempt of the law of nations, and the most unjustifiable spirit of aggrandisement, have been manifested, without having produced, so far as appears to this house, any remonstrance from his majesty's ministers.

Fifthly, That it is the duty of his majesty's ministers, in the present crisis, to advise his

majesty against entering into engagements which may prevent Great Britain from making a separate peace whenever the interests of his majesty and his people may render such a measure advisable, or which may countenance an opinion in Europe that his majesty is acting, in concert with other powers, for the unjustifiable purpose of compelling the people of France to submit to a form of government not approved by that nation.

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A debate not less vehement than the former took place; and, upon a division, the members appeared to be 270 who voted for the previous question, against 44 who supported the motion.

That the sentiments of the members in opposition, upon the conduct of ministers and the causes of the war, might remain yet more fully and explicitly upon parliamentary record, Mr. Grey, on the 21st of February, moved a memorable address to the throne, containing a clear and comprehensive view of the whole subject-matter of dispute. "Various grounds of hostility to France," says this judicious and animated address, "have been stated, but none that appeared to us to have constituted such an urgent and imperious case of necessity as left no room for accommodation, and made war unavoidable. The government of France has been accused

Address
moved by
Mr. Grey.

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of having violated the law of nations and the stipulations of existing treaties, by an attempt to deprive the republic of the United Provinces of the exclusive navigation of the Scheld. No evidence, however, has been offered to convince us that this exclusive navigation was, either in itself, or in the estimation of those who were alone interested in preserving it, of such importance as to justify a determination in our government to break with France on that account. If, in fact, the States General had shewn a disposition to defend their right by force of arms, it might have been an instance of the truest friendship to have suggested to them for their serious consideration, how far the assertion of this unprofitable claim might, in the present circumstances of Europe, tend to bring into hazard the most essential interests of the republic.—We must farther remark, that the point in dispute seemed to us to have been relieved from a material part of its difficulty by the declaration of the minister of foreign affairs in France, that the French nation gave up all pretensions to determine the question of the future navigation of the Scheld. Whether the terms of this declaration were perfectly satisfactory or not, they at least left the question open to pacific negotiation.”—In a subsequent part of

this masterly address notice is taken of the war BOOK XIX.
 waged against France by the invaders and op-
 pressors of Poland, preceded by manifestoes 1793.
 differing from the ordinary hostilities of civilised
 nations. "No effort appears to have been
 made to check the progress of these invading
 armies. His majesty's ministers, under a pre-
 tended respect for the rights and independence
 of other sovereigns, thought fit, at that time, to
 refuse *even the* INTERPOSITION *of his majesty's*
 COUNSELS *and* GOOD OFFICES, to save so great and
 important a portion of Europe from falling un-
 der the dominion of a foreign power. But no
 sooner, by an ever-memorable reverse of fortune,
 had France repulsed her invaders and carried
 her arms into their territory, than his majesty's
 ministers, laying aside that collusive indifference
 which had marked their conduct during the in-
 vasion of France, began to express alarms for
 the general security of Europe."—The address
 concludes with condemning, in the most energetic
 terms, "the conduct of his majesty's ministers
 throughout the whole of these transactions: a
 conduct which could lead to no other termination
 but that to which it seems to have been studiously
 directed—of plunging this country into an un-
 necessary war. The calamities of such a war
 must be aggravated, in the estimation of every
 rational mind, by reflecting on the peculiar ad-

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vantages of that fortunate situation which we have so unwisely abandoned, and which not only exempted us from sharing in the distresses and afflictions of the other nations of Europe, but converted them into sources of benefit, improvement, and prosperity, to this country. His majesty is, lastly, implored no longer to listen to the counsels which have forced us into this unhappy war; but to embrace the earliest occasion which his wisdom may discern of restoring to his people the blessings of peace."

Mr. Pitt declaring, in a few words, that it was unnecessary to enter upon any new discussion relative to the grounds and reasons of the war, the question was put, and the motion of Mr. Grey negatived without a division.

Remark-
able motion
of Mr. She-
ridan.

Unbounded obloquy having been thrown on the views and characters of those who had opposed the measures of administration, Mr. Sheridan, on the 4th of March, moved, That the house should resolve itself into a committee to consider of the seditious practices, &c. referred to in his majesty's speech; declaring at the same time, openly and freely, that his intention was to institute a rigorous inquiry into the truth of the reports so insidiously circulated. The motion of Mr. Sheridan was negatived without a division; but it had the first sensible effect upon the public mind, in exonerating the op-

position from the calumnies to which they had been so long exposed, and in weakening the belief of many respectable persons in the reality of those pretended secret machinations against the government which ministers, as Mr. Sheridan declared himself confident, had denounced for no other purpose than to divert the attention of the public from the actual state of things, and to betray them blindly and with greater facility into a war.

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On the 15th of the same month, the attorney-general, sir John Scott, introduced his famous "Traitorous Correspondence Bill," by which it was not only, according to the precedent of former bills passed at the commencement of former wars, declared to be high-treason to supply the existing government of France with military stores, &c. but to purchase lands of inheritance in France, or invest money in any of the French funds: also to prevent the subjects of Britain from going from this country to France without a license under the great seal. It even prohibited the return of such as were already there, unless on giving security to the government. This bill met with much opposition, and several of the most obnoxious clauses of it were modified and mitigated in its passage through the two houses.

At this period of the session, also, Mr. Pitt

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brought forward his annual statement of finance; and scarcely had the war commenced, when a debt of six millions was incurred and funded,—the temporary taxes imposed for defraying the expense of the Spanish armament being made permanent as a provision for the interest of this new capital. In such a war as that in which we were now engaged for the safety of the country, the security of Europe, and the cause of justice, humanity, and religion, Mr. Pitt professed his hope and confidence, that our exertions would terminate only with our lives. Soon after which, the two houses adjourned for the Easter recess.

Adjourn-
ment of par-
liament.

During this interval, it may be proper to transfer our attention to the state of affairs on the Continent.

State of af-
fairs on the
continent.

In the course of the winter, general Dumouriez had proposed to the Executive Council to take possession of Maestricht, without which he alleged neither the passage of the Meuse nor the territory of Liege could be defended; engaging, by manifesto, to restore it to the Dutch at the end of the war. That important city being then wholly unprepared for defence, the attempt was no doubt extremely feasible; but the government of France, with a firmness which shewed their reluctance to break with the maritime powers, resisted this great temptation, and expressly

commanded the general to preserve the strictest neutrality towards the United Provinces. No sooner was war decided upon than general Dumouriez hastened to put into execution the plan he had formed, to advance with a body of troops posted at the Moerdyke, and masking Breda and Gertruydenburg on the right, and Bergen-opzoom, Klundert, and Williamstadt, on the left, to effect a passage over an arm of the sea to Dordt, and thus penetrate at once into the heart of Holland. In the mean time general Miranda had directions, leaving general Valence before Maestricht, to march with all expedition to Nimeguen, in order to oppose the expected invasion of the Prussians on that side.

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General Dumouriez, assembling his army in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, entered the Dutch territory on the 17th of February. On the 24th Breda surrendered, through the cowardice or treachery of its governor, count Byland, almost on the first summons. The fort of Klundert was taken, after a brave defence, on the 26th. Within nine days afterwards, Gertruydenburg followed the example of Breda; but Williamstadt made an obstinate resistance; and while the French troops were still engaged in the siege of this small, but strong, fortress, intelligence arrived from the eastern frontier of the Netherlands which materially changed the

General Dumouriez enters Holland.

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Successes
of general
Clairfait and
the prince of
Cobourg.

French eva-
cuate Hol-
land.

aspect of the war. On the 1st of March, general Clairfait, having suddenly passed the Roer in the night, attacked the French posts on that side, and compelled them to retreat as far as Alderhaven, with the loss of 2000 men. The following day the archduke Charles, brother to the reigning emperor, carried several batteries, and took nine pieces of cannon. On the 3d, the prince of Saxe Cobourg, who had highly distinguished himself in the war with the Turks, obtained a signal advantage over general Valence and his army, driving them from Aix-la-Chapelle to the vicinity of Liege, with the loss of more than 5000 men and twenty pieces of cannon. The siege of Maestricht was immediately raised; and at midnight, on the 4th, general Miranda gave orders for retreating to Tongres, whence the French armies were again compelled to fall back to St. Tron, where Miranda was joined by general Valence, who had by this time evacuated Liege and its territory; and on the 8th they moved towards Tirlemont.

General Dumouriez himself now arrived to take the command in person, leaving the conduct of affairs on the northern frontier to general de Flers. But the army left to his care was wholly dispirited by the departure of Dumouriez. The Prussians advanced by way of Bois-le-duc. A corps of 12000 Hanoverians, reinforced by seve-

ral thousand British troops, with the duke of York at their head, arrived nearly at the same time in Holland; and the siege of Williamstadt was raised. Instead of proceeding to Dordt, De Flers was compelled to throw himself into Breda, the main body of the army retiring precipitately to Antwerp.

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The troops under Miranda and Valence felt all their confidence revive on seeing their former victorious commander at their head; but the caprice of fortune disappointed their hopes. On the 18th of March a general engagement took place on the Plains of Neerwinden, which continued with unremitting obstinacy from morning till evening, when the French were totally routed, with very considerable loss. Miranda was, upon this occasion, charged by Dumouriez with causing, by his misconduct, the loss of the battle; but that officer retorted with great spirit on his commander-in-chief, vindicating himself with great ability, and plainly intimating his suspicions of treachery on the part of Dumouriez. He declared that Dumouriez, who had never before failed to consult him upon every occasion, did not even mention to him the arrangements for the battle of Neerwinden; and that the position of the enemy had not been previously reconnoitred.

Battle of
Neerwin-
den.

The French continued retreating; and, on the 21st, general Dumouriez was posted near Louvain.

BOOK XIX. Here a sort of tacit suspension of hostilities took place, and the French army was allowed to march back to their own frontier without any serious molestation, on condition of evacuating Brussels, and all the other towns of Brabant, &c. still in their possession. On the 27th, general Dumouriez held a conference with an Austrian officer of high distinction, colonel Mack, from whom, as he tells us, he did not conceal his design of marching against Paris, with a view of re-establishing the constitutional monarchy of 1791: and it was agreed that the Imperialists should act merely as auxiliaries in the accomplishment of this plan; not advancing, except in case of necessity, beyond the frontier of France: and that the troops to be eventually furnished by the prince of Cobourg should act entirely under the direction of general Dumouriez.

Defection of
Dumouriez.

The designs of Dumouriez did not, however, pass unsuspected at Paris. Three commissioners from the executive power had therefore been dispatched to Flanders, under the pretence of conferring with the general concerning the affairs of Belgium. In this interview Dumouriez expressed himself with great violence against the jacobins. "They would ruin France," said he; "but I will save it, though they should call me a Cæsar, a Cromwell, or a Monk." He styled

the Convention, "a horde of ruffians;" and declared, "that this assembly would not exist three weeks longer; that France must have a king:" adding, "that, since the battle of Gemappe, he had wept over his success in so bad a cause."

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On the return of the commissioners to Paris, suspicion being converted into certainty, general Dumouriez was summoned to appear at the bar of the Convention, and M. Bournonville appointed to supersede him. Four new commissioners also were deputed to the army of the north, with powers to suspend and arrest all officers who should fall under their suspicion. On their arrival at Lisle, March 28, the commissioners transmitted their orders to general Dumouriez, to appear before them, and answer the charges against him. But the general had fully arranged his plan, and the Rubicon was already passed. He replied, therefore, "that, in the present exigent circumstances, he could not leave the army for a moment; that when he did enter Lisle, it would be in order to purge it of traitors; and that he valued his head too much to submit it to an arbitrary tribunal."

The commissioners now adopted the daring resolution to proceed to the camp; but they found by experience how dangerous was the attempt to seize the person of a general at the head of his army. On the first of April they ar-

Seizure of
the French
commis-
sioners.

BOOK rived, in company with M. Bournonville, at St.
XIX. Amand, the head-quarters of general Dumou-
1793. riez ; and, being admitted to his presence, ex-
plained to him the object of their mission. After
a long conference, the general, finding them in-
flexible in their purpose, gave the signal for a
body of soldiers who were in waiting, and or-
dered M. Bournonville and the four commis-
sioners, in the number of whom was the noted
M. Camus, immediately to be conveyed to
general Clairfait's head-quarters at Tournay, as
hostages for the safety of the royal family of
France.

Notwithstanding the great popularity of general Dumouriez, symptoms soon appeared in the army of extreme dissatisfaction at this act of treachery and violence. On the morning of the 3d, Dumouriez repaired to the camp of Maulde, and harangued the troops, amidst the murmurs of many of the battalions. On the next day he departed with his suite for Condé, which fortress, with Valenciennes, he had engaged to put into the hands of the Austrians : but on the road he received intelligence that it would not be safe for him to enter the place ; and, in making his retreat, he fell in with a column of volunteer guards, who called to him to surrender : but the general, trusting to the swiftness of his horse, made, with great difficulty, his escape to the

quarters of general Mack, through a dreadful discharge of musquetry. His example was followed by general Lamorlière, the duc de Chartres, son of the duke of Orléans, and a few hundreds of private soldiers only out of the numerous army which he had commanded with such brilliant success. On the very next day appeared a proclamation from general Dumouriez, containing a recapitulation of his services to the French republic, a glowing picture of the outrages of the jacobins, and of the mischiefs to be apprehended from a continuation of anarchy in France; concluding with an exhortation to the French to restore the constitution of 1791, and a declaration on oath that he bore arms only for that purpose.

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This proclamation was accompanied by a very judicious manifesto on the part of the prince of Cobourg, now commander-in-chief of the armies of Austria. After passing some encomiums on the patriotic views of general Dumouriez, it announced, "that the allied powers were no longer to be considered as principals, but merely as auxiliaries, in the war; that they had no other object than to co-operate with the general, in giving to France her constitutional king, *and the constitution she formed for herself.*" On his word of honor he pledged himself, "that he would not come upon the French territory to

Judicious
manifesto of
the prince
of Cobourg.

BOOK XIX. 1793. make conquests, but solely for the ends above specified:" and his serene highness declared further, "that any strong places which should be put into his hands would be considered as sacred deposits, to be delivered up when the constitutional government in France should be restored."

Such was the wise and generous policy of this heroic commander. But, by this time, Antwerp, Breda, and the other conquests of France on the Dutch frontier, were evacuated; and a fatally dazzling scene of ambition and aggrandisement began once more to open to the view of the allied powers. On the 8th of April a grand council was held at Antwerp, at which were present the prince of Orange, accompanied by the grand-pensionary Vander Spiegel, the prince of Cobourg, counts Metternich, Staremburg, &c. also the Prussian, Spanish, and Neapolitan ambassadors. Here the whole plan of operations was completely changed, and the prince of Cobourg was most reluctantly compelled to give the sanction of his name to a proclamation of the 9th of April, virtually rescinding all which was contained in that of the 5th.

Dangerous
situation of
France.

France appeared at this time, it must be confessed, in a situation truly dangerous. She was in a state of open warfare with Austria, Prussia, Great Britain, Holland, Spain, Sardinia, and the Sicilies: her principal army had been driven,

by a series of successful attacks, from all her recent conquests; and was now, by the defection of its commander, in a state of complete disorganisation: the Imperialists, assisted by the efforts of England and Holland, were established in great force on the frontier. On the side of the Rhine, the Prussians, under the duke of Brunswick, threatened the important city of Mentz: and, what was perhaps still more alarming to the French government, a most formidable insurrection at this period broke out in the ancient provinces of Brittany and Poitou, now distinguished by the names of the departments of La Vendée and La Loire. After gaining various advantages over the troops sent against them by the Convention, the insurgents, who professed to act under the authority of Monsieur (the count de Provence), as regent of France, held the city of Nantz itself in a state of siege; and the situation of the revolted provinces being highly favourable to their designs, and enabling them to receive supplies to any amount, and with the utmost facility, from England, little probability appeared of their suppression.

The extreme elation of the court of London in particular, at this moment, displayed itself most conspicuously in a singular memorial presented by lord Auckland, April the 5th, to the

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Elation of
the court of
London.

Sanguinary
memorial of
lord Auk-
land.

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States General*, in which his lordship stated, in allusion to the capture of M. Camus and the other Conventional commissioners, “that the DIVINE VENGEANCE, for the atrocious crime which had been by their High Mightinesses with horror foreseen, seemed not to have been tardy. Some of these detestable regicides are now,” said his lordship, “in such a situation, that they can be subjected to the sword of the law; the rest are still in the midst of a people whom they have plunged into an abyss of evils, and for whom famine, anarchy, and civil war, are about to prepare new calamities. In short, every thing that we see happen induces us to consider as not far distant the end of these wretches, whose madness and atrocities have filled with terror and indignation all those who respect the principles of religion, morality, and humanity. The undersigned, therefore, submit to the enlightened judgment and wisdom of your High Mightinesses, whether it would not be proper to employ all the means in your power to prohibit from entering your states in Europe, or your colonies, all those members of the pretended National Convention, or of the pre-

* It is true that count Staremborg, the Imperial ambassador at the Hague, also signed the memorial; but, from the shortness of the interval that had elapsed, it evidently could not have been in consequence of orders from his court.

tended Executive Council, who have, directly or indirectly, participated in the said crime; and, if they should be discovered and arrested, to deliver them up to justice, that they may serve as a lesson and example to mankind.”—To this sanguinary memorial the superior wisdom and humanity of the Dutch government declined any reply; but it remains a striking historic proof of the similar temper and disposition which frequently actuates those who appear to differ widely in their principles. The spirit of Popery is not confined to those who bear the name of Papists, nor the spirit of Jacobinism to those who are branded with the appellation of Jacobins.

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The political creed of the court of London at this period may be clearly traced in a sermon preached before the house of lords, January 30, 1793, by Dr. Horsley, bishop of St. David's, containing sentiments for which, in the reign of William III. he would have been deprived of his bishopric; but for which, in that of George III. he was shortly after promoted to the superior see of Rochester.—“God, to his own secret purpose,” says this genuine successor of Sibthorp and Manwaring, “directs the worst actions of tyrants no less than the best of godly princes: man's abuse, therefore, of his delegated authority, is to be borne by resignation,

Doctrines of
passive
obedience
and non-
resistance
preached
before the
house of
peers by
bishop Hor-
sley.

BOOK XIX. 1793. like any other of God's judgments. The opposition of the individual to the sovereign power is an opposition to God's providential arrangements. In governments which are the worst administered, the sovereign power, for the most part, is a terror not to good works, but to the evil; and, upon the whole, far more beneficial than detrimental to the subject. But this general good of government cannot be secured upon any other terms than the submission of the individual to what may be called its extraordinary evils. St. Paul represents the earthly sovereign as the vicegerent of God, accountable for misconduct to his heavenly master, but entitled to obedience from his subjects."

The energy of the French Convention displayed itself in a most extraordinary manner in the midst of the present circumstances of embarrassment and distress. New commissioners being nominated to succeed Camus and his colleagues, omitted no means of restoring order, and invigorating the spirit of the French army. General Dampierre, an officer distinguished by his conduct and valour, and who had evinced his patriotism by his resistance to the orders of Dumouriez, was provisionally appointed to the chief command; and in a very short time was so successful in his exertions as to be enabled to lead his troops with confidence into action. From

Heroic exertions and death of general Dampierre.

the middle of April to the 8th of May, a variety of partial, though sharp and bloody, engagements took place between the two armies, in which no decisive advantage was gained. On that day general Dampierre advanced in person to dislodge a large body of the enemy posted near the Wood of Vicoigne; but martial ardor prompting him to expose his person too rashly to the enemy's fire, his thigh was carried off by a cannon-ball, and he died the following day, deeply regretted by all descriptions of persons. His military career though short, was glorious, and the laurel entwined by the cypress adorned his grave. In this action the English troops were engaged in the field for the first time in this war, and behaved with all their characteristic intrepidity; but by the inexperience of the duke of York their commander (for there is no royal road to knowledge), being ordered to the attack of a strong post in the wood, where they were exposed to the fire of some masked batteries, they suffered so much, that it was not thought expedient to make any official return of the killed and wounded.

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Duke of
York com-
mander of
the English
and auxili-
ary troops
on the con-
tinent.

“Great God!” exclaimed on this occasion one of the French generals to an English officer taken prisoner in the engagement, “why do you gallant Britons come hither to destroy us, or be yourselves destroyed? We have no quarrel

BOOK with you; and are fighting only in defence of
XIX. that liberty which was purchased for you by the
 1793. best blood of your ancestors."

Military
 transac-
 tions.

The siege of Valenciennes being now in contemplation of the prince of Cobourg, it was determined by the allies to attempt an attack upon the fortified camp of Famars, which protected and covered that important fortress, Condé being already invested. At day-break, on the 23d of May, the British and Hanoverians under their royal commander, and the Austrians and German auxiliaries under the prince of Cobourg and general Clairfait, made a joint assault upon the advanced posts of the French. The contest was severe; but the French were evidently worsted, and, in the course of the night, they abandoned their camp, retreating towards Bouchain and Cambray. This success enabled the allies to lay siege in form to Valenciennes. On the 1st of June general Custine arrived to take the command of the armies of the North and the Ardennes; but he deemed himself unequal to the task of rendering effectual relief to that fortress, before which the trenches were opened on the 14th of that month; and, towards the beginning of July, the besiegers were able to bring 200 pieces of heavy artillery to play upon it. Mines and counter-mines innumerable were formed also in the course of this

Siege and
 capture of
 Valenciennes,
 Condé,
 Mentz, and
 Quesnoy.

siege, both by the assailants and the garrison; and many fierce subterranean conflicts were carried on with various success. But on the night of the 25th of July those under the glacis and horn-work of the fortress were sprung, on the part of the besiegers, with complete success, and the English and Austrians seized the favorable moment for attacking the covered-way, of which they made themselves masters. On the next day the place surrendered on honorable terms of capitulation, the duke of York taking possession of it in behalf of the emperor of Germany. Nearly at the same time the garrison of Condé yielded themselves prisoners of war, after enduring all the rigors of famine; and Mentz submitted, not without a long and resolute resistance, to the arms of Prussia.

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On the 8th of August the French were driven from the strong position they occupied behind the Scheldt, which was known by the name of Cæsar's Camp: after which a grand council of war was held, wherein it was determined that the British, Hanoverians, Dutch, and Hessians, should separate from the Austrians, and form a distinct army, not dependent upon the co-operation of the Austrians. This was strongly opposed by the prince of Cobourg, and general Clairfait, who clearly saw the fatal consequences,

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Fatal separation of the duke of York from the Austrians.

Brilliant action at Lincelles.

of a system so different from that which had been adopted with such glorious success by the duke of Marlborough and prince Eugene. The British army, conducted by the duke of York, immediately decamped; and, on the 18th of August, arrived in the vicinity of Menin, where some severe contests took place, and the post of Lincelles, lost by the Dutch, was recovered at the point of the bayonet, with a signal display of spirit and intrepidity, by the English, though very inferior in force, led on by general sir John Lake.

Duke of York forms the siege of Dunkirk.

Moving, with little resistance, towards Dunkirk, the trenches were opened before that fortress on the 24th; and the duke of York, having entertained a secret correspondence with the governor-general, O'Moran, flattered himself with obtaining speedy possession of the place. On the other side, general Clairfait invested the town of Quesnoy; and the prince of Cobourg, who commanded the covering army, having defeated a body of troops which had been sent for its relief, the place surrendered on the 11th of September.

With these achievements the successes of the allies may be said to have terminated; and Quesnoy was the extreme point of the progress made in the course of this memorable cam-

paign by the combined powers against France.—
 We must now once more change the scene, and
 revert to the state of affairs in England.

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It is a fact most memorable in the history of this eventful period, that, on the 2d of April, M. Le Brun, minister of foreign affairs in France, addressed a letter to lord Grenville, stating that the French republic was desirous to terminate all its differences with Great Britain and to end a war dreadful to humanity, and requesting a passport for a person vested with full powers for that purpose to the court of London; and, in a separate letter, he named M. Maret as the proposed plenipotentiary of France, if this intimation produced the desired effect. The first letter was delivered to lord Grenville by Mr. John Salter, notary-public, who formally attested the receipt of it from M. Le Brun. To this most important advance on the part of the French government the British ministry, obstinate in their errors, paid not the least attention. From this early concession it is probable that the French perceived their mistake in supposing (as they had, indeed, a good right to do, from the tenor of the existing treaty of 1786) that the dismissal of the ambassador Chauvelin was intended by the court of London as a declaration of war; whereas it subsequently appeared, from the secret negotiation which Mr.

Ineffectual
 overture of
 France for
 peace.

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Pitt was at the same time carrying on with general Dumouriez, that this famous dismissal was a mere act of pride and passion, and by no means of deliberate and premeditated policy. It is even not improbable that, in the unreflecting precipitation of the moment, the second article of the treaty of 1786 was not at all adverted to by politicians of such a description as now composed the British cabinet *. But the hopes

* Article 11. *Extract.* “For the future security of commerce and friendship between the subjects of their said majesties, and to the end that this good correspondence may be preserved from all interruption and disturbance, it is concluded and agreed that if at any time there should arise any misunderstanding, breach of friendship, or rupture, between the crowns of their majesties, which GOD forbid, (*which RUPTURE shall not be deemed to exist until the recalling, or sending home of the respective ambassadors and ministers,*) the subjects of each of the two parties, residing in the dominions of the other, shall have the privilege of remaining and continuing their trade therein, without any manner of disturbance, so long as they behave peaceably, and commit no offence against the laws and ordinances, &c.” The plain and unavoidable implication of the remarkable clause included in the parenthesis is, that the act of sending away an ambassador is an act of violence and hostility, and such as of itself shall be deemed to constitute a RUPTURE. As the treaty in question was never pretended to suffer any change in its operation, or abatement of its force, in consequence of the deposition of the most christian king, it is obvious that the executive power actually existing in that country, must be understood to represent the crown and majesty of France.

of the enemies of France were at this period high and sanguine; and although the French executive government unquestionably would not have made any such overture in the present circumstances, had they not been previously determined to give ample satisfaction to England, whose friendship and support must have been of the utmost consequence to the reigning party, and as a prelude to other concessions, the obnoxious decree of November (1792) had been recently rescinded by the convention, this consideration had no weight with the British ministry, who would not even deign, in this second paroxysm of blind presumption, to hearken to what M. Maret had to propose.

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Far from feeling the slightest inclination to encourage an overture so consonant to the dictates of policy and humanity, a treaty was about this time concluded with the king of Sardinia, by which England bound herself not only "to furnish to his Sardinian majesty a subsidy of 200,000*l.* per annum, to be paid three months in advance," which was an article of trivial moment, but also "not to conclude a peace with the enemy without comprehending in it the entire restitution of all the dominions belonging to this monarch previous to the commencement of the war;" although it had never been pretended that it was incumbent upon Great Britain to

Treaty with
Sardinia.

BOOK enter into the war against France for any such
XIX. preposterous purpose.

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Unparallel-
 ed number
 of bank-
 ruptcies in
 London.

On the re-assembling of parliament after the Easter-recess, the attention of the legislature was forcibly attracted by the unparelled number and extent of the bankruptcies which had taken place since the commencement of the war, as the first blessed fruits of it, and the almost total stagnation and paralysis of commercial credit. A select committee was immediately appointed to report their opinion to the house on the best means of applying a remedy to this tremendous evil, which originated, as there was good reason to believe, in the alarm occasioned by the invasion of Holland. The report of the committee stated, "that it will be advisable to issue Exchequer-bills, to the amount of five millions, to commissioners nominated for the purpose, for the assistance and accommodation of such mercantile persons as may apply, and who shall give proper security for the sums that may be advanced on interest, for a time to be limited." This mode of relief, dangerous in its ultimate tendency and liability of abuse, was found extremely beneficial in its immediate operation, and the tide of commerce soon returned to its accustomed channel.

Commercial
 credit re-
 stored.

Parliamentary investi-
 gation of

On the 25th of April Mr. Sheridan called the attention of the house to the late extraordinary

memorial of lord Aukland to the States General; and made, in the course of his speech, a quotation from Vattel, who says, ‘that nations at war ought carefully to abstain from all harsh expressions of hatred, animosity, or contempt, of each other.’—“This rule of policy and decorum,” he said, “had been totally neglected by the noble lord. But the indecency of his late memorial was by no means its worst feature: it disclosed a principle of war entirely new in the history of mankind, viz. *that we were entitled to take upon ourselves the execution of the Divine vengeance*, and, if applied in its full extent, some millions of men must be put to death before we could negotiate for peace. To infer the righteousness of the cause in which we were engaged from the partial success we had obtained, was impious and presumptuous. We should be at least silent till we saw the termination of hostilities. Vengeance was the prerogative of the Divinity, to whom alone it ought to be left—a prerogative too high and dangerous to be arrogated or exercised by a being so limited in his powers and capacities as man.” He concluded with moving an address to his majesty, expressive of the displeasure of the house at the memorial in question; and stating, that the minister who presented it had departed from the principles on

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lord Auk-
land's me-
morial.

BOOK XIX. which the house had concurred in the measures
 for the support of the war.

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Mr. Pitt entered into an elaborate defence of lord Aukland, and uttered a vehement invective against the Convention. He asked whether it was any crime to desire that such enormous delinquents might be detained, in order to be delivered up to a competent tribunal of their own country, at a period when a counter-revolution appeared so likely to take place. In the course of his speech the minister maintained, in high and lofty terms, the right of Great Britain to repel the unjust attacks of France—to chastise and punish her; and to obtain *indemnification* for the past, and *security* for the future. The motion of Mr. Sheridan was, in conclusion, rejected by a vast majority of voices.

Some time after this, lord Aukland being returned to England, a resolution was moved in the house of peers by lord Stanhope, importing “that the meaning and intention of the said memorial was to bring the French Conventional commissioners delivered up by Dumouriez to trial, in order to put them to death.” His lordship styled the memorial an infamous, horrid, and diabolical paper; and said, that if the resolutions he should move were carried, he should think it his duty to proceed against lord Auk-

land as the author. Lord Grenville took up the defence of lord Auckland with violence, and declared that the memorial was framed in the spirit, if not in the letter, of the ambassador's instructions: and he moved an amendment, pronouncing it conformable to the sentiments of his majesty, and consonant to those principles of justice and policy which it became the honor and dignity of the nation to express. Lord Auckland vindicated his own memorial, and avowed it to be his opinion, "that those who caused the death of the king of France were murderers, and that murderers ought to be brought to justice." And the amendment of lord Grenville was carried without a division.

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As the charter of the East-India Company would expire in the year 1794, it was the wish of very many enlightened patriots that the trade to the East Indies should be thrown open, and their system of commercial monopoly for ever destroyed. But Mr. Dundas, in the present session, completely extinguished all hopes of this nature by bringing in a bill, which soon after passed into an act, to renew the charter for twenty years, upon terms which varied little from the existing regulations.

Charter of
the East-
India Com-
pany pro-
longed.

On the 2d May, Mr. Grey made his promised and celebrated motion for a reform in

Mr. Grey's
motion for a
reform in

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the repre-
sentation.

the representation. Many petitions were previously presented to the house, tending to the same object, but, for the most part, by the obnoxious mode of universal suffrage and annual parliaments,—the moderate reformers being almost universally converted into alarmists. That this popular plan of reform would be unattended by those terrible consequences which have been so generally apprehended is extremely probable; but the odium under which it had the misfortune to labor was a sufficient reason for the judicious to abandon the idea of it. But the circumstance most remarkable in these petitions was, that the majority of the petitioners claimed the adoption of this plan upon the principles of the duke of Richmond, as a matter of absolute abstract right, and not upon any mere ground of national utility and policy. Nothing certainly can lead to more absurd and dangerous consequences than the admission of a claim of this nature; or, indeed, to suppose that any political right can exist which does not originate in political utility: but there is good reason to believe, that though the petitioners, in consistency with their principles, could not ask less than they imagined to be their undoubted and indefeasible right, they would, for the most part, have been well satisfied with such a moderate and temperate

melioration of the present system as would have sufficed to attain the chief practical purposes of parliamentary reform.

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The petition from Sheffield was signed by no less than 8000 names; from Norwich, 3700; from Birmingham, 2700; from London and Westminster, 6000. But the most remarkable by far of the petitions of this day was that framed by the Society of the Friends of the People, and presented to the house by Mr. Grey. It was of such length as to take up near half an hour in reading; containing a most masterly recapitulation of the abuses of the present parliamentary system of representation; expressed in very dignified and correct language; and praying the house for an effectual reform of these abuses, in animated terms, without specifying any particular mode of redress.

“Your petitioners complain (say they) that the number of representatives assigned to the different counties is grossly disproportioned to their comparative extent, population, and trade.

“Your petitioners complain that the elective franchise is so partially and unequally distributed, and is in so many instances committed to bodies of men of such very limited numbers, that the majority of your honorable house is elected by less than 15000 electors, which, even if

BOOK XIX. the male adults in the kingdom be estimated at
 1793. so low a number as three millions, is not more
 than the two hundredth part of the people to be
 represented.

“Your petitioners complain that the right of voting is regulated by no uniform or rational principle.

“Your petitioners complain that the exercise of the elective franchise is only renewed once in seven years.

“Your petitioners thus distinctly state the subject-matter of their complaints, that your honorable house may be convinced that they are acting from no spirit of general discontent, and that you may with the more ease be enabled to inquire into the facts, and apply the remedy.”

After a very accurate statement of the extensive mischiefs arising from these sources, they add—“Your petitioners must now beg leave to call the attention of your honorable house to the greatest evil produced by these defects in the representation of which they complain, namely, the extent of private parliamentary patronage—an abuse which obviously tends to exclude the great mass of the people from any substantial influence in the election of the house of commons, and which, in its progress, threatens to usurp the sovereignty of the country, to the equal danger of the king, of the lords, and of the

commons. Your petitioners are confident that, in what they have stated, they are supported by the evidence of facts; and they trust that, in conveying those facts to your honorable house, they have not been betrayed into the language of reproach or disrespect. Anxious to preserve in its purity a constitution they love and admire, they have thought it their duty to lay before you, not general speculations deduced from theoretical opinions, but positive truths susceptible of direct proof; and if, in the performance of this task, they have been obliged to call your attention to assertions which you have not been accustomed to hear, and which they lament that they are compelled to make, they intreat the indulgence of your honorable house."

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Whoever reads this celebrated petition, and still retains the opinion that the parliamentary representation of this kingdom needs no reform, may be regarded as in a state of mind far beyond the reach of facts or of argument. The allegations of the petition were dwelt upon by Mr. Grey with great eloquence and ability; and all the chief speakers in the house took part in the debate, which was protracted to the unusual length of two days. Mr. Pitt opposed the motion for referring the petitions to a committee, upon the plausible pretext of the danger which would, at the present crisis, be incurred by what

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he styled a change in the constitution : holding up in terrific prospect the events which had recently taken place in France, though between the political situations of the two countries there existed not the most distant analogy. It could not escape notice, that although Mr. Pitt, from the commencement of his political career, pledged himself never to lose sight of this great object, that perfidious minister had, since his accession to power ten years since, made only one feeble effort for its accomplishment : and he had moreover opposed, almost invariably and with effect, every liberal measure which had from time to time been brought forward in parliament for the extension of the general system of constitutional liberty ; demonstrating, by this means, the necessity of that radical reform which he now professed so vehemently to deprecate. The house at length divided, the votes being 41 *for*, and 282 *against*, referring the petitions to a committee.

A motion equally unsuccessful with every preceding one was made by Mr. Fox on the 17th of June, that an humble petition be presented to his majesty to restore to the nation the blessings of peace. “ We had at this time (Mr. Fox observed) gained all the ostensible objects of the war, particularly by putting a stop to the aggrandisement of France, and repelling

her attacks upon our allies the Dutch. Where then was the necessity or policy of pursuing the war in conjunction with the Germanic powers?"

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Mr. Pitt, highly elated with the recent successes of the confederate arms, disdainfully asked, "whether it was the design of this motion that we should content ourselves merely with the relinquishment of the conquests so unjustly made by France, without obtaining either indemnity for past injuries, or security against future ones? It would be strange if we should do that at the commencement of a most successful war, which could only be advisable at the conclusion of the most disastrous one." Mr. Burke also vehemently exclaimed against every proposition or overture tending to reconciliation, and explicitly avowed his opinion, that while the existing system continued, peace with France was totally inadmissible. The motion being negatived by a vast majority, the mover prophetically declared that the ministerial policy would drive France to become a military republic.

On the 21st of June (1793) the king prorogued the parliament. In his speech on this occasion his majesty noticed "the rapid and signal successes which had, in an early period of the campaign, attended the operations of the combined armies; the respectable and powerful force which he had been enabled to employ by sea and land; and

Parliament
prorogued.

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the measures which he had concerted with other powers for the effectual prosecution of the war ; all of which afforded the best prospect of a happy issue to the important contest in which we were engaged."—But events unfortunately proved that infallibility is not one of the prerogatives of royalty.

On the 10th of January (1793) the parliament of Ireland was convened at Dublin by the earl of Westmoreland, lord-lieutenant of that kingdom, the situation of which had for some time past been gradually growing very critical. The sanguine hopes of emancipation which the Catholics, who constituted three-fourths of the whole population of Ireland, had indulged at the time of the military convention at Dungannon in the year 1783, had been quickly extinguished ; for it manifestly appeared that the whole body of the Protestants, those who were the most zealous for, as well as those who were most violent against, the cause of parliamentary and political reform, were almost equally hostile to the Catholic claims. The earl of Charlemont himself had, in the strongest manner, discountenanced them ; and the Catholics, in despair, seemed to abandon their project. But on the first splendid success of the revolution in France, all their former expectations revived with increase of vigor ; and the liberal and noble principles of government, promulgated by the

National Assembly in its memorable Declaration of Rights, infused a kindred spirit into the minds of many who had been previously friends and advocates of reform on a more narrow and contracted scale.

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Ever since the year 1780 the Irish Catholics had chosen from among themselves a general committee of delegates, which sat at Dublin, and whose province it was to watch over the interests of the Catholics as a distinct body; and a numerous association of the friends of liberty, consisting indiscriminately of Protestants and Catholics, had recently been established, under the name of the SOCIETY of UNITED IRISHMEN, whose object it was to obtain a complete emancipation for the Catholics, and a radical reform of parliament on the principles of universal suffrage and annual election.

In the preceding session of 1792 the government had made some concessions to the Catholics, which only served to show that they were regaining some degree of political consequence, and to inspire them with the hope and belief of greater success. By this act all legal obstructions to the intermarriages of Catholics and Protestants were removed. The right of taking apprentices and of keeping schools was restored to them, and they were permitted to practise at the bar. But the grand code of tyranny and

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1793. oppression still remained in force: and in a report made by a committee of the Society of United Irishmen to the members of it at this period, a most frightful picture is exhibited of the restrictions and disabilities, the pains and the penalties, to which the great body of the Catholics of Ireland were still liable, under the several heads of education, guardianship, marriage, self-defence, exercise of religion, civil franchises, acquisition and enjoyment of property.

The number and extensive scope of the statutes enumerated in the report were calculated to excite the astonishment, no less than the indignation and abhorrence, of every reflecting person—"Statutes," to use the language of the reporters, "unexampled for their inhumanity and impolicy, under the galling yoke of which the great majority of the Irish nation had long patiently languished."—"We recognize," says this excellent report, "a free state in the right exercised by its inhabitants of framing laws for the security of their liberty and property against all invasion: but with us the order of civil association is reversed, and the law becomes the foe, the ruffian that violates the rights and destroys the harmony of society.—As to the favored part of the community, your committee (say they) considering that this black code, worthy of a Turkish divan, in its expanded operations over

this realm, is utterly subversive of the fundamental principles of the constitution, feel it their duty seriously to inculcate this truth, that our liberties must ever rest on the most precarious foundation, while seven-eighths of our fellow-citizens remain palsied in the exercise of those rights which were our common inheritance.—No constitution can be secure unless the body of the people have an equal interest therein.”

Also the general committee of Catholics published (March 1792) a Declaration, in the strongest terms disavowing and abjuring the most obnoxious tenets imputed to the Catholics, and such as could alone, with any plausibility, be pleaded in palliation of the dreadful rigor of the penal code—such as the doctrine of the deposition of princes by the pope; that no faith is to be kept with heretics—that men may be absolved from the obligation of their oaths—that the pope possesses any civil authority or jurisdiction whatever within the realm; and even that the pope has any claim to the attribute of infallibility, or the power of pardoning sins or moral offences at his will. The Declaration concludes with a most solemn renunciation of all claim or pretence to the lands forfeited by the different acts of settlement and attainder; and an equally solemn disclaimer of any inten-

BOOK XIX. tion to subvert the actually subsisting establish-
ment either in church or state.

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In another of their publications they thus in pathetic and moving terms invoke the justice and compassion of the legislative power. "Behold us before you, three millions of the people of Ireland, subjects of the same king, inhabitants of the same land, bound together by the same social contract, good and loyal subjects to his majesty, his crown, and government, yet doomed to one unqualified incapacity—to an universal civil proscription. We are excluded from the state, we are excluded from the revenues, we are excluded from every distinction, every privilege, every office, every emolument, every civil trust, every corporate right. We are excluded from the navy, from the army, from the magistrature, from the professions. We are excluded from the palladium of life, liberty, and property—the juries and inquests of our country. From what are we not excluded? We are excluded from the constitution.—We most humbly and earnestly supplicate and implore parliament to call this law of universal exclusion to a severe account, and now at last to demand of it upon what principle it stands of equity, of morality, of justice, or of policy.—We demand the severest scrutiny into our principles, our actions, our words, and our thoughts.—Where is that people who, like us,

can offer the testimony of an hundred years' patient submission to a code of laws, of which no man living is now an advocate, without sedition, without murmur, without complaint? Our loyalty has undergone a century of severe persecution for the sake of our religion, and we have come out of the ordeal with our religion and with our loyalty. Why then are we still left under the ban of our country? We differ, it is true, from the national church in some points of doctrinal faith.—For this," say these remonstrants, with a just and decent pride, "we offer no apology. We do not exercise an abject or obscure superstition. If we err, our errors have been, and still are, sanctioned by the example of many flourishing, learned, and civilized nations."

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Adverting once more in this eloquent statement of their grievances to their total and unmerited exclusion from the rights and privileges of the constitution, they say, "this exclusion is the source of every evil; it makes property insecure, and industry precarious; it pollutes the stream of justice; it is the cause of daily humiliation. It is the insurmountable barrier, the impassable line of separation which divides the nation, and which, keeping animosity alive, prevents the entire and cordial intermixture of the people: and therefore inevitably it is that some

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 1793. participation in the liberties and franchises of our country becomes the primary and essential object of our ardent and common solicitation."

As a proof of the sincerity and integrity of the public declaration made by them of their principles, the committee of Catholics, in an admirable address to the nation at large, state, as perfectly coincident with their own, the opinions of the famous Catholic universities of the Sorbonne, Douay, Louvaine, Alcalá, Salamanca, and Valladolid, which had been formally consulted relative to the chief points now at issue, by the committee of English Catholics, at the express desire of the English minister, preparatory to the passing of the English Catholic Bill; —the university of Louvaine, in particular, expressing its amazement that such questions should, at the end of the eighteenth century, be proposed to any learned body, by the inhabitants of a kingdom that glories in the talents and discernment of its natives*.

* The Queries transmitted to the Foreign Universities were as follow:

First, Has the pope or cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the church of Rome, any civil authority, power, jurisdiction, or pre-eminence whatever, in the realm of England?

Secondly, Can the pope or cardinals, or any body of men, or any individual of the church of Rome, absolve or dispense

The English cabinet seemed, in consequence of the alarming and agitated state of the country, to be fully convinced that some decisive measures of redress must now be adopted in relation to the Catholics, and lord Westmoreland was instructed thus, in the course of his speech to the two houses at the opening of the present session, to express himself:—"I have it in particular command from his majesty to recommend it to you to apply yourselves to the consideration of such measures as may be the most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of his majesty's Catholic subjects in support of the established constitution. With this view his majesty trusts that the situation of his majesty's Catholic subjects will engage your serious attention, and in the consideration of this subject he relies on the wisdom and liberality of his parliament."

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Early in March the expected Bill of Relief was brought into the house of commons by Mr.

with his majesty's subjects from their oath of allegiance on any pretence whatsoever?

Thirdly, Is there any principle in the tenets of the Catholic faith by which Catholics are justified in not keeping faith with heretics, or other persons differing from them in religious opinions, in any transaction either of a public or private nature?

It is scarcely necessary to say, that all the universities consulted answered decidedly, and some of them indignantly, in the negative, to all these queries.

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Secretary Hobart, and, in its original form, it appeared well calculated to answer the purpose intended. The influence of the executive government was in this instance no less laudably than powerfully and seasonably exerted; but it had strong obstacles to encounter in the bigotry and prejudice of a great majority of the house. "The inveteracy of some," says a writer well informed on this subject, "was not to be overcome even in the agonies of their despair. Whatever could be saved to them from this wreck of their monopoly they secured by exceptions from the broad and liberal relief which the first form of the bill held out *."

Concessions
made to the
Catholics:

Some of these exceptions were admitted; others were rejected. The chief enacting clause, enabling the Catholics to exercise and enjoy all civil and military offices and places of trust or profit under the crown, was almost paralyzed by the subsequent restrictions,—that it should not be construed to extend to enable any Roman-catholic to sit or vote in either house of parliament, or to fill the office of lord-lieutenant or lord-chancellor, or judge in either of the three courts of Record or Admiralty, or keeper of the privy-seal, secretary of state, lieutenant or custos rotulorum of counties, or privy-coun-

* FLOWDEN'S '*Twenty Months*.'

seller, or master in Chancery, or a general on the staff, or sheriff or sub-sheriff of any county, with a long catalogue of other disqualifications. BOOK
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Mr. Foster, speaker of the house of commons, declared, on the second reading of the bill, that he considered it as the prelude and certain forerunner of the overthrow of the Protestant establishment. And the lord-chancellor Fitzgibbon, who was regarded as the head of the Anti-catholic party, declared, "that it was an absurd and wicked speculation to look to the total repeal of the Popery laws of that kingdom, or to endeavour to communicate the efficient power of the Protestants to the Catholics of Ireland. As long (said his lordship) as the nature of man continues what it is, a zealous Catholic cannot possibly, or with good faith, exercise the powers of government in support of a Protestant establishment, or of the Protestant connection with Great Britain. If, therefore, I am the single man to raise my voice against such a project, I will resist it."

opposed by
the lord-
chancellor
Fitzgibbon.

The opposition of the lord-chancellor was seconded with great vehemence by Dr. Agar, archbishop of Cashel, a prelate who had, on a former occasion, distinguished himself by the memorable declaration, "that the Roman-catholic religion was a religion of knaves and fools."

The bill at length, clogged with innumerable

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modifications and restrictions, passed with few dissentient voices into a law : and though it stopped far short of Catholic emancipation, and bore no relation to parliamentary reform, it was supposed to be all that the executive government could, at this time, without too violent an exertion, effect ; and upon this account it was received with gratitude and satisfaction. Mr. Curran, an eminent advocate of the Irish bar, and an eloquent speaker in parliament, declared, in relation to the situation of the Catholics, “ that had the petition passed over last year in contemptuous neglect by the Irish parliament been this year rejected by the throne, there remained only one other throne for misery to invoke. From that last and dreadful appeal the country had now been saved by the paternal benignity of the sovereign and father of his people.”—As a farther concession to the reviving spirit of liberty in Ireland, a Libel Bill passed, similar to that of Mr. Fox in England ; the power of the crown to grant pensions on the Irish establishment was limited to the sum of 80,000*l.* ; and certain descriptions of placemen and pensioners were excluded from the privilege of sitting in the house of commons. Also the king declared his acceptance of a limited sum fixed at 225,000*l.* for the expences of his civil list, in lieu of the hereditary revenues of the crown ;

“ a measure,” as the speaker, in his speech to the lord-lieutenant at the close of the session, justly observed, “ essential for effectuating in that kingdom a similar control over the application of the public money to that which had been long established in Great Britain.”

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On the other hand, the court was gratified by the passing of Alien and Traitorous Correspondence Bills, analogous to those of England; and yet more by an act of an extraordinary nature, “ To prevent the election or appointment of assemblies, purporting to represent the people, or any description or number of the people, under pretence of preparing or presenting petitions, &c. to the king or either house of parliament, for alteration of matters established by law, or redress of alleged grievances in church or state.” This act plainly indicated the apprehensions of government that the Catholics would not be permanently satisfied with the concessions now made to them; and the measure in question was adopted, in order to make it impracticable for them to meet in provincial or national convention. The policy, therefore, of the present session was not to extinguish discontent, but to allay it for the present, and to repress the external symptoms of this political distemperature in future.

The earl of Westmoreland, on proroguing the

BOOK XIX. 1793. parliament on the 16th August (1793), informed the two houses, "that the wisdom and liberality with which they had attended to his majesty's recommendation in favor of his Roman-catholic subjects were highly pleasing to the king."—That the sentiments of the British cabinet were not, however, really favorable to the general interests of liberty too plainly appeared from the manner in which the powers of government were exercised at this time both in England and Scotland.

Notwithstanding the great predominance of the spirit of loyalty, and the numberless addresses of duty and allegiance transmitted from all parts of the united kingdom, and the perfect security of the government, a mean and merciless spirit of revenge displayed itself in the prosecution and punishment of very many petty offenders accused of the vague and indefinable crime of sedition—among whom were several printers and booksellers; so that it became extremely dangerous to publish any tract or pamphlet reflecting in any manner upon the measures of government, and the liberty of the press was silently and virtually annihilated.

Extraordi-
nary prose-
cutions for
sedition in
Scotland.

The prosecutions in Scotland were of a nature more important and interesting. The spirit of political reform had diffused itself very widely in that kingdom, blended, as is too frequently the

case, with the alloy of enthusiasm and theoretic extravagance. A numerous association of persons of this complexion, sent from various towns and districts, met this summer at Edinburgh, under the pompous title of a Convention of Delegates for obtaining Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments. This was no infraction of any known existing law; and a similar proceeding had taken place in England in the year 1780—a convention of delegates from different parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of obtaining a reform in parliament, having met in London repeatedly, not only without judicial or parliamentary animadversion, but with national approbation and applause—Mr. Pitt, now first minister, being himself a delegate to this convention.

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The extreme indiscretion of the Scottish association appeared, however, very manifest, in their affected adoption of the modes and forms established in the National Assembly of France; and more especially in their habitual use of the obnoxious term “Citizen.” But although these things indicated great puerility and want of judgment, it cannot be denied that many persons of great respectability, attending only or chiefly to the object in view, and regardless of these follies which they no doubt disapproved and despised, had accepted the office of dele-

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gates, and, with perfect rectitude of intention, entered as members into this association. On a sudden, and while the legality of this conventional assembly was yet unquestioned, divers of the delegates were apprehended (August, A. D. 1793) on a charge of sedition, and brought to trial before the High Court of Justiciary, by whom they were found guilty upon evidence which would in the English courts have been held totally inadmissible, and by the judges of that despotic tribunal sentenced to be transported beyond the seas for the term of fourteen years, to such place as his majesty should judge proper.

Tyrannical
sentence of
transporta-
tion passed
on Muir,
Gerald,
Skirving,
Margarot,
and Palmer.

Of this number were, Mr. Muir, one of the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh, Mr. Gerald, whose eloquent defence attracted much notice, Mr. Skirving, and Mr. Margarot, who were soon afterwards with many circumstances of relentless barbarity, conveyed in a government transport, with a crowd of felons of the vilest description, across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans to the settlement of Botany-Bay. The same severe fate awaited Mr. Palmer, an English clergyman of unblemished moral character, whose zeal for the dissemination of unitarian principles in religion had induced him to fix his residence at Dundee, where he had opened a chapel and collected a congregation. Being a

friend to political no less than religious liberty, this gentleman had been engaged in re-printing an address to the people of Scotland on the subject of reform, containing many bold truths and some unguarded expressions; not, however, more censurable than might easily be found in thousands of papers, the political ephemera of the day, which have in England passed altogether unnoticed.

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For this offence Mr. Palmer was tried by the Circuit-court of Justiciary, and sentenced to seven years' transportation beyond the seas. The amiable qualities of the individuals who were condemned excited a general sympathy for their sufferings, and inspired into the breasts of thousands a perfect detestation of the man and the minister who had raised himself to power by his pretended zeal for the cause of parliamentary reform, and had now become the most implacable persecutor of those who still retained the principles which he had abandoned; preferring poverty, exile, and death, to the possession of riches and honors purchasable only at the price of an infamous and profligate apostasy. In relation to these trials, it was contended in vain, though with much strength of legal argument, that the crime charged upon these gentlemen was merely that of *leasing-making*, or public libel; the punishment for which, by the

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1793. law of Scotland, is *banishment*, under which term transportation to a specific place, which is obviously a sentence of a severer nature, could not be included. As the forms of procedure in the criminal courts of that kingdom are extremely arbitrary, and the evidence admitted in them to the last degree vague and slight, the punishment annexed ought at least to be mild and moderate: but admitting the charges against the present delinquents to have been fully proven, the sentence passed upon them was so disproportionate to their guilt, that the whole transaction was calculated to excite, and in fact it did excite, general indignation and horror, not in Britain only, but throughout Europe. "The trial of the Scottish advocate T. Muir," says a respectable German writer, "who, for various endeavours to effect a reform of the parliament of his country, was condemned to be transported to Botany-Bay, must excite in the breast of every German an esteem for his native land. We here see a man sent to Botany-Bay on account of an accusation to which a German court of justice would have been ashamed to listen*."

The military operations of the autumnal months of the campaign remain to be narrated. In a session of the French Convention,

* ALTONA Journal, A. D. 1794, No 2.

held August 16th, the energetic and fertile genius of Barrere conceived the sublime project of exciting the whole people of France to rise *en masse* to expel the invaders from their territory: and by the unremitted exertions of the Committee of Public Safety, this plan, in appearance so chimerical, was regularly digested, and the new levies were organized with singular dispatch and ability.

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On the 25th of August the duke of York, with his army, arrived before Dunkirk, after waiting long for the train of artillery from England necessary for the siege. During the delay a secret correspondence, carried on by the duke with general O'Moran, governor of the place, was discovered; O'Moran was dismissed, and afterwards suffered for his treachery; and the garrison was augmented by a reinforcement of 12000 veteran troops. The design was therefore hopeless. The works were, however, carried on, though with trivial effect, till the 6th of September, on which day the covering army, commanded by the Hanoverian field-marshal Freytag, was unexpectedly attacked and totally routed by a large body of troops suddenly collected by general Houchard; the marshal himself, and prince Adolphus, son of the king of England, were taken prisoners, though afterwards rescued. A grand sortie was at the same

Duke of
York totally
defeated at
Dunkirk.

BOOK time attempted by the garrison with complete
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Barbarous
executions
of the gene-
rals Houch-
ard and
Custine.

success, and the duke of York was compelled on the 7th to raise the siege with the greatest precipitation. The fine train of heavy artillery from England was only landed to be lost; no less than 114 pieces falling into the hands of the enemy. The French government, however, far from being satisfied with what was effected, charged the general, M. Houchard, with culpable negligence, in not cutting off the retreat of the English army altogether, as it was generally allowed he might with much facility have done: and being denounced by the Jacobin party, he suffered by the severe sentence of the Revolutionary Tribunal. What was still more extraordinary, general Custine, who had signalized himself by very brilliant exploits during the former and the present campaign on the banks of the Rhine, met with the same cruel fate for not attempting, by some grand and decisive effort, the relief of Valenciennes. The world stood amazed at these instances of republican ferocity; and it was imagined by those who were ignorant of the springs by which human-nature is actuated, that no general of talents would be found to assume in future the command of the French armies: but events soon demonstrated the grossness of this mistake. In fact, when so much was exacted, none but those who felt the

consciousness of superior genius, combined with heroic courage, could venture to undertake so perilous a trust. BOOK XIX.
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The French army of the North now took a strong position, under general Jourdain, the successor of Houchard and Custine, near the town of Maubeuge, in the blockade of which the allies were engaged with their whole re-collected force under the prince of Cobourg. On the 15th of October the enemy made a grand attack upon the army of the prince with such vigour and effect as to compel that able commander to abandon his chain of posts and repass the Sambre. General Jourdain was by this means at liberty to send detachments, in various directions, to maritime Flanders, where they took possession, with little resistance, of Werwick, Menin, and Furnes. They then proceeded to Nieuport, which was saved only by having recourse to the desperate expedient of an inundation; and Ostend itself was thought not free from danger. Prince of Cobourg compelled to repass the Sambre.
Werwick, Menin, and Furnes, captured by the French.

Early in the month of September, Landau had been invested by the combined powers; but that important fortress being covered and protected by the French army posted, under general Isembert, at Weisseburgh on the Lauter, general Wurmser, the Austrian commander, on the 13th of October made a grand Operations on the Rhine.

BOOK XIX. 1793. attack upon the lines, which were carried, with the towns of Lauterburg and Weissemburg, after a comparatively feeble resistance. The French retreated with precipitation, and the forts of Haguenau and Vauban were successively reduced by general Wurmser. In the beginning of November the Conventional commissioners, St. Just and Le Bas, arrived for the purpose of encouraging and re-organizing the troops. They ordered immense reinforcements from the neighbouring departments; and to afford a third example of what they styled salutary severity, general Isembert, charged with treachery in the affair of Weissemburg, was sentenced to be shot at the head of the army. General Hoche, who, as commander of the army of the Moselle, had checked the progress made by the duke of Brunswic, after an advantage gained by the Prussians at Pirmasens, now advanced to sustain the army of the Rhine under general Pichegru; and these two heroes, who were opposed by the equal bravery and skill of the veteran Wurmser, performed in conjunction prodigies of valor. At length the Austrian commander, overpowered by superior force, was compelled slowly and reluctantly to relinquish his conquests; and, after a continued series of the most obstinate conflicts, the Republican army, on the 27th of December, entered Weissemburg in triumph,

Retreat of
the Austrian
and Prussian
armies.

the Imperialists retreating behind the Rhine, and the duke of Brunswic, who had maintained against repeated attacks his position at Lautern, hastily falling back to cover the city of Mentz. The siege of Landau was immediately raised, and Keisarslautern, Germersheim, and Spires, were repossessed by the French troops.

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Siege of Landau raised.

Notwithstanding the very serious aspect which the rebellion in La Vendée had for a time worn, the efforts of the Convention were eminently successful also in that quarter. The character of the insurgents, who were the devoted adherents of CHURCH and KING, was made up of ignorance, superstition, and barbarity. It was said that they mingled the sacramental wine with the blood of their adversaries, and thus administered it to the people. On one of their captured standards, presented to the Convention, was embroidered, on one side the figure of a bishop in his pontificals, and on the reverse the Virgin Mary with an infant Jesus. General Charette, their commander, assaulted the city of Nantz while the citizens were celebrating the civic feast of the 10th of August, but was vigorously repulsed; after which the insurgents were defeated in a variety of engagements madly contested with the generals Westerman, Beysser, and Rossignol; and at the end of October they no longer appeared in any considerable force:

Rebellion in La Vendée suppressed.

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An expedition had been planned by the British government, but with many concomitant and characteristic circumstances of incoherence and imbecility, for the purpose of co-operating with the royalists on the coasts of Brittany, and the command entrusted to an officer of high and approved merit, lord Rawdon, become by the recent death of his father earl of Moira. But this was only a secondary object with the English cabinet, who strained every nerve to exhibit to the best advantage the military talents of the duke of York at the head of a numerous army in Flanders—losing the opportunity, never to be retrieved, of striking a mortal blow at France in a far more assailable quarter. At length, on the 1st of December, when the insurrection was in a manner subdued, the British armament sailed from Portsmouth, and early the next morning they made the coast of Normandy near Cherbourg; but not one of the concerted signals was answered from the shore; upon which the English commander retired to Guernsey, where he learned from undoubted intelligence the discomfiture and dispersion of the royalists, against whom the vengeance of the Convention, by this time wholly Jacobinical, was exercised with the most savage and bloody ferocity. To the proceedings of this assembly, since the æra of the trial and execu-

tion of the king, it is now become necessary to advert.

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On the 15th of February, 1793, the plan of a new constitution, on pure republican principles, was presented to the convention by M. Condorcet, a leader of the Brissotine faction, in a report from the committee appointed for that important purpose. As the plan in question was universally regarded by all persons, of all parties, as altogether visionary and impracticable, it would be superfluous to dwell upon the defects of it. The most striking feature of this extraordinary model of a perfect government was, that the members of the council in which the executive power was proposed to be vested were to be elected by the people at large; and it was apparent that the whole was the dream of a theorist. This failure was particularly unfortunate, as it left all the powers of government, executive, legislative, and judicial, still to be exercised without control by the Conventional Assembly, in which the Jacobins were continually gaining ground upon their adversaries.

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Proceedings
of the Con-
vention.

Bold machi-
nations of
the Jacobins.

In the month of March the celebrated Revolutionary Tribunal, for deciding upon offences against the state, was organised. This dreadful court consisted of six judges, elected by a majority of voices in the assembly, to

Revolution-
ary Tribunal
established.

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whom were joined a public accuser and two assistants. The sentence of the court was wholly arbitrary, and without appeal; and the crimes on which it was to pronounce were vague, undefined, and undefinable—seeming to comprehend not merely the actions but the words, and even, by a horrid mockery of justice, the thoughts and most secret intentions, of those suspected of disaffection.

On the first of April a decree, fatal in its consequences to the Girondist or Brissotine party, was passed, abolishing the inviolability of the deputies of the Convention when accused of crimes against the state. In the same month the powers of the Committee of Public Safety were so much enlarged, that the Executive Council became a mere cypher in the government. The chiefs of the Brissotines appeared to be astonished and confounded at these daring and desperate measures of their inveterate adversaries, confident in their prowess and popularity, and made no vigorous opposition to decrees evidently intended to pave the way to their destruction. Nearly at the same time it was resolved that the branches of the royal family remaining in France should be detained as hostages for the safety of general Bournonville and the arrested deputies; and that, excepting those confined in the Temple, all the Bourbons

should be removed to Marseilles. In this decree the duke of Orleans, though a member of the Convention, and although he had courted popularity by the most degrading and criminal sacrifices, was included.

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On the 10th of May the Republic was, in opposition to the favourite ideas and secret efforts of the Brissotines, who preferred a federal government, upon the plan of that established in America, declared ONE AND INDIVISIBLE. It was now manifest that the Girondists, so inferior to their antagonists in vigor and decision, and even, notwithstanding the intellectual and literary accomplishments of the leaders of the party, grossly deficient in practical talents for government, must finally sink under the contest, of which they were unequal to the management. On the 13th of May M. Condorcet proposed, that the present Convention should be dissolved, and a new Convention chosen on the 1st of November next: but this being violently opposed, the Brissotines, dreading to come to extremities, weakly consented to an adjournment of the motion. On the 18th of May, M. Guadet, insisting that the Convention was no longer free in Paris, and that the power of the state was passing into the hands of the anarchists, moved, much too late to produce any effect, the decisive proposition that the sittings of the Convention

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be removed to Bourges, and all the constituted authorities of Paris should be broken and dissolved. M. Barrère recommended the appointment of a committee to inquire into the evils complained of, which was, by the pusillanimous compromise of the Girondists, decreed by the Convention.

These half measures of the Brissotine party only increased the rage and excited the contempt of the Jacobins—accelerating, in all probability, the catastrophe which almost immediately ensued. The city of Paris, in consequence of the violence of the two parties in the Convention, was kept in a state of extreme agitation, and scarcely could the inhabitants of that lawless metropolis be restrained from a renewal of the dreadful scenes lately acted there. The successive sittings of the Convention till the 31st exhibited a shocking picture of tumult and confusion. Very early on the morning of that day the tocsin was sounded, the *générale* beaten, and the alarm-gun fired. Terror pervaded every breast. At seven o'clock the Convention met, and soon a deputation appeared at the bar from the Revolutionary Committees, demanding, among various other things, the immediate arrest of Clavière, minister of finance, and Le Brun, of foreign affairs. The department of Paris next appeared, and demanded a

Fall of the
Brissotines.

decree of accusation against Brissot, Guadet, Roland, Isnard, Vergniaud, and many others of the most distinguished note in the Gironde party. M. Barrère, who had, with infinite art and address, vibrated between the two factions, now took a decided part with the Jacobins, and, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, proposed that the accused deputies should be invited to suspend themselves from their functions. With this the major part of them complied; and in a short time, being invested with an armed force, and cannon planted at the avenues, a decree passed the Convention, ordering the arrest of the deputies, with the ministers Clavière and Le Brun.

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After the public commotions had in some degree subsided, the first step of the triumphant party was to frame the model of a new constitution, which those who were in the actual possession of power, as might also be suspected of the Brissotines, would probably not appear in too much haste to carry into effect. In about a month the completion of the expected constitution was announced, consisting of no less than 124 articles, which, after a very slight discussion, were recognised by the Convention as the Constitutional Act. But as the execution of this act was suspended during the revolutionary crisis, and never subsequently revived,

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it may, like the former, be suffered quietly to pass into oblivion. Yet was this Jacobin constitution generally regarded as less essentially defective than that of M. Condorcet. Population was, agreeable to the principles of it, the sole basis of representation, the election of members annual, and the right of suffrage universal. The Legislative Body proposes the plan of laws, which are transmitted for confirmation or rejection to the several departments. The Executive Council, consisting of twenty-four members, is chosen by the legislature from a list composed of one nominee from each department; and half the number is renewed by each legislature in the last month of the session. The judicial power to be exercised by persons to be elected yearly by the Electoral Assemblies.

Internal
commotions
in France.

The transactions of the 31st of May caused a great shock throughout the nation, and France seemed ready to fall a prey to the distractions which, at this fatal period, afflicted the new-created republic. Various of the accused deputies effected their escape to different parts of the country which seemed well disposed to rise in support of the authority of the Convention; but the city of Paris and the soldiery remained firm to the government party. The department of Calvados was the first in arms; and, about the

beginning of July, a considerable force had assembled, which assumed the appellation of the Departmental Army, under the direction of the fugitive deputies, Petion, Buzot, Barbaroux, &c.; but on their approach to Evreux, they were encountered by the national troops, and soon broken and dispersed, most of the deputies being made prisoners. An insurrection also took place in the department of the Gironde, excited by their own proscribed representatives, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Guadet, &c. which was also quickly suppressed. But by far the most formidable resistance to the reigning faction took place in the south, where the three great cities, Lyons, Marseilles, and Toulon, entered into a sort of federal league, and seemed to menace the dissolution of the existing authorities. A strong force was dispatched against them, under general Carteaux, about the end of July; and in the beginning of August the Marseillois were driven from the department of Vaucluse, and on the 24th the republicans captured the town of Aix; after which Marseilles threw open its gates and submitted. But the people of Toulon and the French admiral Trugoff entered into a negotiation with the English admiral, lord Hood, who was then cruising in the Mediterranean; and he took possession both of the town and the shipping, in the name of Louis XVII.

Toulon surrendered in trust to the English.

BOOK XIX. and under the express and positive stipulation
 1793. that he was to assist in restoring the constitution of 1789.

Siege of
Lyons.

Barbarities
committed
by the
Jacobins.

In the mean time general Kellerman, who commanded the army of the Alps, was dispatched against Lyons, which contained an immense and motley multitude of disaffected citizens of all classes—Girondists, royalists, and constitutional monarchists. The city sustained, for more than seven weeks, a close and vigilant blockade, and was gradually reduced to a state of extreme distress. Kellerman, not being deemed sufficiently zealous in the cause, was superseded by a general Doppet, to whom the city, now become a heap of ruins, surrendered on the 8th of October. The barbarities exercised upon the inhabitants after the surrender, by order of the Conventional commissioners, Collot d’Herbois and Fouche, shock all the feelings of humanity, and almost surpass the limits of credibility. The guillotine was considered as an instrument of too slow an operation ; numbers were destroyed by grape-shot discharged from artillery ; and others crowded together in barks, and sunk in the river, which, in Jacobin language, was styled “the revolutionary torrent of the Rhone.” The following extract from a letter addressed to the Convention, by the commissioners, November 16, breathes rather the

spirit of demons than of men :—" We are pro- BOOK
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secuting the object of our mission with the
energy of republicans, who are deeply im-
pressed with the sentiments suitable to that
character. Being convinced that there is no
person innocent in this infamous city, but those
who were loaded with or put in irons by the
assassins, we distrust the tears of repentance.
Nothing can disarm our severity. We must tell
you, indulgence is a weakness—Demolitions are
too slow. Republican impatience requires more
rapid means. The explosion of a mine, and the
devouring activity of flames, can alone express
the omnipotence of the people." After they
had satiated themselves with blood and slaughter,
a decree passed the Convention, by which the
wall and public buildings of the city were ordered
to be destroyed, and the name of the city itself,
by a sarcasm worthy of such an assembly, changed
to that of "Ville Affranchie."

The siege of Toulon was commenced immediately after the reduction of Marseilles. On the 8th of September general Carteaux arrived at the passes of Olioulles, and the city was formally invested. Various encounters, in which the besiegers and the besieged were alternately successful, producing no effect, general Carteaux was removed, and, after a short interval, general Dugommier assumed the command. Nearly at the

BOOK XIX. same time general O'Hara arrived from Gibraltar with considerable reinforcements, composed of divers nations. On the 30th of November the garrison made a vigorous sally under general O'Hara in person, with a view to destroy some batteries upon the heights near the city. The French troops were surprised, and fled; but the victors, pursuing the enemy too far, fell in with a formidable force sent to cover the retreat of the fugitives. The allies fled in their turn, and general O'Hara being wounded, was obliged to surrender himself prisoner *. On the morning of the 19th of December the French attacked, with enthusiastic impetuosity, the forts L'Eguillette and Balaguier, which commanded the city, the Conventional commissioners, Salicetti and Robespierre the younger, in their tri-coloured scarfs, marching at the head of the republican

* Amid the crimes and excesses of every kind with which the government of France was at this period chargeable, instances of the most heroic virtue in individuals were very frequent. General O'Hara, with a generosity characteristic of the truly brave, had directed the sum of sixty louis d'ors to be distributed among those French volunteers into whose hands he fell after resistance and retreat became equally impracticable, and who had conducted themselves, in relation to him, with the utmost courtesy. But general Dugommier, in a polite note, informed him, that they unanimously declined the acceptance of the gratuity—contented with the pleasure they felt in assisting unfortunate humanity.

columns, and made themselves masters of both with great slaughter. A resolution was immediately taken to evacuate the place, which was executed not without extreme difficulty. The town was bombarded from noon till ten in the evening, during which interval preparations were making for a general embarkation, the wretched inhabitants crowding to the shores, and demanding the promised protection of the English. But though great efforts were made, and thousands conveyed on board the shipping, thousands more were left to suffer all that the rage and vengeance of their countrymen could inflict. The stores, and the men of war in the harbour, were set on fire, threatening every instant to explode, and blow all around them into the air. Three ships of the line only, of thirty-one in the harbour, were all that the British admiral was able to carry away, amidst the appalling cries of agony and destruction which completed the horror of the scene.

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Toulon evacuated by
the English.

On the repossession of the city by the French, the same scenes of barbarity and carnage were repeated as had before taken place at Lyons, and the name of Toulon changed to that of Port de la Montagne.

Such were the fruits of the first continental campaign in which England took an active share, and such the prospect it displayed.—

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The defenceless and abandoned royalists everywhere vanquished and butchered; the energy of the French arms triumphing in every quarter; and the armies of the allies driven back with unheard of slaughter, traversing with giant strides the ground which by inches they had won and with incessant labour.

Trial and
execution of
the queen
of France:

Scarcely had the savage and brutal faction of the Jacobins acquired a complete ascendancy, than Marie Antoinette, late queen of France, was removed from the Temple to the common prison of the Conciergerie, where she remained till she was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal on the 15th of October. The main charge against her, under a variety of heads, was founded upon her continued and diversified attempts to effect a counter-revolution. A remarkable and very characteristic circumstance was stated in one of the articles of accusation, “ that on the 10th of August, 1792, the day of
“ the attack upon the castle of the Tuilleries,
“ she kept the Swiss guards in a state of intoxication, and, presenting the king with a pistol,
“ she said, ‘ This is the moment to shew your-
“ ‘ self;’ on his refusal calling him ‘ COWARD !’ ” After an hour’s consultation the jury pronounced her guilty of all the charges. The queen, on hearing the verdict returned, fixed her eyes stedfastly on the ground, from which she never

was observed to raise them more. The fortitude and dignity with which she conducted herself on her trial did not forsake her to the last. In her degraded and forlorn estate she might indeed consider death less as a punishment than as a release; and, on the day following, she expiated her errors and frailties, whatever they might be, with calm resignation on the public scaffold, and upon the same spot where Louis XVI. had previously suffered. This unhappy princess, whose faults are absorbed in pity for her fate, possessed in the most critical situations great firmness of resolution, not a single particle of which could she by any effort infuse into the mind of the king her husband: but she was equally destitute of those intellectual talents which command respect, as of the softer virtues, more appropriate to her sex, which conciliate and engage affection.

The fate of the unfortunate deputies of the Gironde party was deferred from time to time, till the complete overthrow of their adherents in the departments should give security to their prosecutors, and afford the proper materials for their conviction. On the 24th of October the trial commenced before the Revolutionary Tribunal, which was on this occasion crowded with anxious spectators. The persons accused were Brissot, Vergniaud, Valazé, Sillery, Fauchet,

and of the
deputies of
the Gironde.

BOOK XIX. 1793. Fonfrède, Lasource, Gensonné, and fourteen others of inferior note. It is remarkable, that among the crimes laid to their charge was that of having caused war to be declared, first against Austria, and afterwards against England and Holland. As at the different periods alluded to the Girondists were the ruling party in the state, the charge was doubtless in a certain sense true; and, as France sufficiently felt the evils resulting from the war, the insidious purpose of the Jacobins was perfectly answered by representing it as occasioned by the erroneous or criminal politics of the Brissotines, who, in their turn, did not scruple to retort the charge upon the Jacobins, as the persons whose clamour and violence made these several declarations unavoidable. The plain truth is, that both parties concurred in both instances, and that the successive declarations in question were at the time regarded by all France, and not without strong colour of reason, as just and necessary: and this reciprocation of reproach was manifestly no other than the malignant effusion of an inveterate and infuriate spirit of faction. But the article on which they were convicted was, the having conspired against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, and exciting a rebellion in the departments of the South, and in that of Calvados. Valazé

stabbed himself as soon as he heard the sentence pronounced. The remaining one and twenty deputies were, on the 30th of October, conveyed from the prison to the Place de la Révolution, and there executed—meeting their fate with the utmost fortitude, and many of them, actuated by the noblest sentiments of patriotism, exclaiming, under the fatal axe of the guillotine, “ *Vive la République!*”

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These shocking executions were succeeded by a vast number of others equally abhorrent to every principle of justice and humanity;—for the most part it is scarcely possible to state upon what pretences; though the real fact doubtless was, that the victims singled out by revenge or suspicion were sacrificed in consequence of their attachment to the vanquished party. In the direful catalogue were found the names of Manuel, president of the Commune of Paris; the brave and veteran general Luckner; the learned and philosophic Bailly; the excellent Malesherbes; the gallant Kersaint; the young and amiable Barnave; the virtuous Rabaut de St. Etienne; and, to mention no more, the celebrated and accomplished madame Roland, wife of the minister of that name, who himself indeed, with Petion, Le Brun, Condorcet, and some others, escaped the scaffold, but terminated their lives no less miserably in various modes.

Savage proceedings of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

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Ascendency
of Robes-
pierre.

France now began to wear a face of universal horror; and, among the tygers in human shape who polluted the air which they breathed and the land on which they trod, the detestable name of Robespierre became about this period incomparably the most conspicuous in infamy. Amid the innumerable sacrifices made by the infernal Revolutionary Tribunal, there was one which seemed to shed a pale gleam of pleasure over the deep and dreadful gloom—this was the execution of Philip duke of Orléans, whose character was made up of an assemblage of vices and crimes, without the intervention of one single solitary virtue. He possessed not, according to common opinion, even the courage almost inseparable from high birth, and which gives, when carried to a certain pitch of elevation, a sort of factitious lustre to villany. Finding his fate inevitable, he suffered nevertheless with apparent composure, amid the insults and reproaches of the populace.

Extravagant
conduct of
the Conven-
tion.

As if eager at this period to carry every species of extravagance to the height, the National Convention, if the remnant of the national representation which still retained their seats in the assembly could merit that appellation, seemed on the sudden seized with the wildest phrenzy of impiety. On the 7th of November, Gohet, the republican bishop of Paris, with his

grand-vicars and various other unworthy members of the ecclesiastical body, entered the hall of the Convention, and solemnly resigned their functions, renouncing, in terms of profane contempt, their profession as Christians, amidst loud acclamations of applause. By a decree of the Commune of Paris, the churches were shut up, and a number of allegorical divinities, Liberty, Equality, &c. were consecrated as objects of worship; and a painted harlot was publicly enthroned in the cathedral of Nôtre Dame in the character of the goddess of Reason. The observance of the Sunday, that antient and venerable institution, and even the æra in use for fifteen centuries throughout Christendom, were abolished, and a new calendar substituted analogous to that of Greece, agreeably to which the year was divided into twelve months of thirty days each, with five intercalary days set apart as a sort of Saturnalian festival; each month being subdivided into decades, and a respite from labour allowed on the tenth day.

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New calendar established.

The example of the bishop of Paris seemed to excite an enthusiastic spirit of emulation. Lequinio and Laignelot, deputies of the Convention, wrote to that assembly from Rochefort, Oct. 2. " We pass from miracle to miracle—Eight priests of the Catholic persuasion, and one minister of the Protestant church, disrobed

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themselves on the day of the last decade, in presence of the whole people in the Temple of Truth, heretofore called the parish church of this town. In this place there will no longer exist more than one mode of preaching morality—but one repository for the remains of the dead, whose resurrection has been perpetually preached by superstition for the torment of the living.”

Boisset, another commissioner in the department of Ardèche, says, “Fanaticism is destroyed ! The altars of Christianity are replaced by altars more holy.”—Julien of Toulouse, a member of the Convention, and a minister of the Protestant church for twenty years, publicly, in the midst of that assembly, renounced his functions for ever.—“I declare (said he) that I will no longer enter into any other temple than the sanctuary of the laws ; that I will acknowledge no other divinity than Liberty, no other worship than that of my country, no other Gospel than the Republican Constitution.” Dumont, one of the National Commissioners, announced to the Convention, that; “in order to destroy fanaticism, he arrests all priests who celebrate religious ceremonies on Sundays.” Even the existence of Christ, as a real person, was disputed by the ingenuity, or rather the effrontery, of modern infidelity ; and M. Volney, in his admired work, *RUINES de les EMPIRES*, scrupled not to style

‘Christianisme’—“culte allegorique du Soleil, sous les noms cabalistiques de Chris-en ou Yes-us *.”

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In allusion to the monstrous transactions of this portentous period, it has been eloquently and energetically observed, “that the reign of atheism in France was avowed the reign of terror. In the full madness of their career, in the highest climax of their horrors, they shut up the temples of God, abolished his worship, and proclaimed death to be an eternal sleep:—in the very centre of Christendom, Revelation underwent a total eclipse, while atheism, performing on a darkened theatre its strange and fearful tragedy, confounded the first elements of society, blended every age, rank, and sex, in indiscriminate proscription and massacre, and convulsed all Europe to its centre, that the imperishable memorial of these events might teach the last generations of mankind to consider religion as the pillar of society, the parent of social order, and the safe-guard of nations †.”

It is wonderful that, amid the horrors of this dismal period, while “the death dance of

* TACITUS gives an account somewhat different :—“Auctor nominis ejus CHRISTUS, qui, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat.” Annal. 15. § 44.

† Hall’s Discourse on Modern Infidelity.

BOOK democratic revolution" was still in rapid move-
 XIX. ment, among the tears of affliction, and the
 1793. cries of despair, "the masque, the song, the
 theatric scene, the buffoon laughter, went on as
 regularly as in the gay hour of festive peace*." The
 picture which enraptured speculatists had
 once delighted to draw of the glorious and
 happy effect of this unparalleled revolution was
 now enveloped in impenetrable gloom, and the
 flattering delusions of hope had vanished as the
 unsubstantial colors of the gilded bow; while the
 enemies and detractors of the fair form of
 Freedom, now lying prostrate in the dust,
 exclaimed, That out of the tomb of a murdered
 monarchy had arisen a vast tremendous un-
 formed spectre, in a guise far more terrific than
 had ever before appalled the imagination and
 subdued the fortitude of man†.

The manners of Robespierre, who in a short
 time acquired an absolute ascendancy in the
 Convention, were uniformly gloomy and austere.
 Laborious, suspicious, irascible, vindictive, im-
 perious, a contemner of wealth and pomp,
 Barrère termed him "the giant of the revolu-
 tion.—My astonished genius," said he, "trem-
 bles before his."

M. Garat, speaking of his own intercession

* Burke's 'Regicide Peace.' † Burke's Reflections.

with Robespierre in behalf of the imprisoned Girondists, says: "Je vis à l'instant qu'il mettoit lui son orgueil, son triomphe, et sa grandeur, à écraser impitoyablement ses ennemis:—Je vis à l'instant que lui ne trouvoit sa sureté que dans le destruction de tous ceux qui lui inspiroient des craintes *." The figure of this extraordinary man is described as mean and insignificant, his countenance sallow and disgusting; but such was his eloquence, that, when he rose to speak, his personal defects were in a manner forgotten. His voice, which in common conversation was weak and tremulous, in the Tribune acquired the most commanding tone and animated expression; his whole aspect became imposing, and his eyes seemed to flash sparkles of fire. During the reign of this ferocious tyrant there was under every footstep a mine, in every house a spy, on every bench of justice an assassin. From the Var to the Moselle, from the Pyrénées to the Ardennes, Terror reared her gorgon crest, and the hearts of all were frozen with consternation.

Such has long been the vast superiority of the naval power of England, that, in every war waged for more than a century past, maritime conquests seem regarded by the English nation

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Naval trans-
actions.

* Mémoires de Garat, p. 57.

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Tobago
taken.Forts in St.
Domingo
captured.Pondicherri,
Mahé, and
the French
settlements
on the coast
of Coroman-
del, reduced.Neutral
powers in-
sulted by
the court of
London.

almost as a matter of course. The valuable island of Tobago was taken by a British squadron under admiral Laforey, about the beginning of April. From an early period of the French revolution the West-India islands belonging to France, and particularly St. Domingo, had been agitated and convulsed by the revolutionary spirit, and by premature and injudicious attempts to confer the rights of free citizens in that part of the globe upon the “gens de couleur,” who constitute a large proportion of the inhabitants. In consequence of the violence of the internal commotions in that extensive island, which had become a scene of dreadful desolation and bloodshed, the settlements of Fort Jérémie and Cape Nicola-Mole were surrendered to the English before the conclusion of the summer. The islands of Miquelon and St. Pierre, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, were given up at the first summons. Early intelligence of the war being also transmitted to the East Indies, Pondicherri, Mahé, and the other French settlements on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar were captured, with little resistance, by the troops of the India Company, under the conduct of general Stewart.

It is remarkable, that although the chief complaint against the French government, on the part of the English ministry, was founded

on its invasion of the rights of neutral powers, and though they had assumed great merit with the nation, however falsely, for having observed the exactest neutrality themselves, those very ministers had no sooner engaged in the war, than they adopted the most violent measures to compel the powers still remaining neutral, to *fraternise* with England. Mr. Drake, the British envoy at Genoa, peremptorily insisted upon an immediate and unqualified declaration of hostility on the part of that republic against France. He maintained "that neutrality among nations cannot take place but with respect to such wars as are carried on between *lawful powers*: that to talk of neutrality in the case of a contest between religion and atheism, laws and anarchy, loyalty and perjury, virtue and vice, humanity and murder, is to vilify its very name: and that of course, in the present war against the usurpers of the supreme power in France, no government can declare itself neuter without becoming their accomplice, and degrading itself in the eyes of all Europe." But the Genoese government, animated by the eloquence and patriotism of the doge, a worthy descendant of the illustrious house of Doria, with equal spirit and dignity, replied, "That if the republic were to be forced from her neutrality, she never would take part with those who had threatened her with such

BOOK XIX. unprovoked injustice." Numerous levies were made and arms distributed to the citizens by the senate, in order to enforce this determination. On the other hand, the British and Imperial ministers demanded passports for their departure, and the port of Genoa was strictly blockaded by an English squadron. A memorial was nearly at the same time presented by lord Robert Fitzgerald to the Helvetic confederacy, framed upon the model of those addressed by lord Auckland to the States General, in which it is stated, as a subject of grievous complaint, that "the vile and ferocious men, assembled at Paris under the name of a Convention, had manifested their desire of strengthening their connections with Switzerland.—Objects of universal execration," exclaims the ambassador, "they have had the audacity, magnificent and mighty lords, to make an injurious exception for you alone in Europe.—A lasting peace cannot exist between the wise council of the Helvetic States, and a banditti associated for the purposes of devastation.—In the present circumstances, even neutrality cannot authorise any correspondence with the factions or their agents. When two legitimate powers are at war, the relations of any state with one or the other cannot be injurious to their respective rights. But the present war being directed

against usurpers, all correspondence which a neutral state should carry on with them, would be an acknowledgment of their authority, and consequently, an act prejudicial to the Allied Powers."—The Helvetic government replied with temper and firmness, "that a rigid and exact neutrality was the sacred and invariable maxim of their ancestors, and that they trust his Britannic majesty, following the example of his illustrious predecessors, will respect the independence of the Helvetic confederacy."—Lord Hervey, also envoy at Florence, made no scruple, in conformity doubtless with his instructions, to insist upon the dismissal of M. de la Flotte, the French ambassador, in twenty-four hours; and with this demand, enforced by the menaces of the English admiral, lord Hood, the grand-duke, who had demonstrated a most decided inclination for peace, knowing the strict connexion subsisting between the king of Great Britain and his brother the emperor, was compelled to comply; and war was declared by him against France on the 10th of October.

A very memorable declaration was, towards the close of the year (October 29), published by the court of London, professing to state to the world in general, and to the people of France in particular, the sentiments and views of the king of Great Britain in the present crisis of

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Gross inconsistency and duplicity of the English ministry.

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affairs. The language of the declaration is specious and insidious, bearing the stamp of talents far superior to those employed in the correspondence with M. Chauvelin. "His majesty," it is said, "by no means disputes the right of France to reform its laws. It never would have been his wish to employ the influence of external force with respect to the particular form of government to be established in an independent country. Neither has he now that wish, except in so far as such interference is become essential to the security and repose of other powers. Under these circumstances he demands from France, and he demands with justice, the termination of a system of anarchy which has no force but for the purposes of mischief. The king demands that some legitimate and stable government should be established, founded on the acknowledged principles of universal justice, and capable of maintaining with other powers the accustomed relations of union and peace. It is for these objects that he calls upon the people of France to join the standard of an hereditary monarchy, not for the purpose of deciding, in this moment of disorder, calamity, and public danger, on all the modifications of which this form of government may hereafter be susceptible, but in order to unite themselves once more un-

der the empire of law, of morality, and religion." BOOK
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Under this plausible but ambiguous language, so different from that which emanated a few months before from the wisdom and justice of the prince of Cobourg, the court of London, while she *seemed* to promise extremely fair, left herself, *in fact*, at full liberty to act as she pleased, conformably to the suggestion of her interest, her caprice, or her ambition—prompted only by the varying impulse of the “existing circumstances.” The king of England did not even pledge himself not to concur in the partition or dismemberment of the restored monarchy when the season of general tranquillity arrived. The Declaration only says:—“The king would propose none other but equitable and moderate conditions; not such as the expenses, the risk, and the sacrifices, of the war might justify, but such as his majesty thinks himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring with a view to his own security and the future tranquillity of Europe.”—And who would venture to pronounce what these might amount to; should victory attend the arms of the allies confederated in so holy and so just a cause?—To speak gravely, it is no wonder that a performance thus abounding in art, and thus deficient in clearness

BOOK XIX. 1793. and candor, should produce no sensible effect on even that part of the French nation (and it was certainly at this period a very large and respectable part) which wished for the re-establishment of the constitutional monarchy.

The scheme, equally vile and visionary, of starving France into submission, which was begun before any declaration of hostility was made on either side, in palpable violation and defiance of a subsisting treaty of amity and commerce, and even while the last perfidious professions of perfect neutrality were quivering on the lips of the English ministry, was pursued by the court of London, at this period, with unrelenting malignity. During the sitting of the diet at Ratisbon this year, the minister of Hanover presented a rescript to that assembly, stating, "That notwithstanding the Imperial prohibition of the export of grain to France, the trade is still carried on to the essential service of the enemy; but that it was now ordered at Stade that every Hamburgh vessel should be inspected by the guard-ships. The Hamburgh merchants," the rescript goes on to complain, "made a futile evasion, in saying that the Imperial prohibition had not yet been published at Hamburgh; notwithstanding its publicity could not be doubted, it having appeared in the Directory of the Lower

Saxon Circle, and was certainly communicated to the magistrates of Hamburgh." These worthy citizens, who had received no injury from France, doubtless felt not only some chagrin for the loss of their commerce, but some reluctance to heighten the miseries of a great nation whose resentment they might one day feel, by adding the horrors of famine to the devouring rage of foreign and domestic war.

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On the 6th of November a most alarming order was issued, by the king in council, to all ships of war and letters of marque, "that they shall stop and detain all ships laden with goods the produce of any colony belonging to France, *or carrying provisions or other supplies for the use of such colony*, and shall bring the same, with their cargoes, to legal adjudication in the courts of Admiralty." This struck at the root of the regular and lawful commerce carried on between the American States and the French West-India islands, and could be regarded in no other light than as an act of robbery as violent and unjust upon the HIGH-SEAS as any that could be committed on the HIGH-WAYS. It was, however, revoked, after a vast number of captures had been made under its authority, by a subsequent order in six weeks after its publication; under the just apprehension, that to

Alarming
order of
council.

BOOK persist in the enforcement must inevitably in-
XIX. volve the nation in an open war with the United
1793. States of America. Why the order was originally issued, does not admit of so easy a solution.

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Session of Parliament, 1794. Debates on the Address. Pacific Motion of the Marquis of Lansdown. Investigation of the Conduct of the Scottish Judges. Debates on the Landing of Foreign Troops in the Kingdom. Annual Statement of Finance. Bill for the partial Abolition of the Slave Trade—rejected. Increase of the Land Forces. Voluntary Contributions. Addresses for Peace moved by Mr. Whitbread and the Earl of Guildford. Motion in Favour of La Fayette by General Fitzpatrick. Motion for an Enquiry into the Losses on the Continent, by Major Maitland. Motion for taxing Places and Pensions. Bill for enlisting Emigrants. Subsidy Treaty with Prussia. Message from the King respecting Seditious Societies—Debates upon the Message. Habeas Corpus Act suspended. Motion by Mr. Sheridan for the partial Abolition of the Test Laws. Series of Resolutions moved by the Duke of Bedford and Mr. Fox. Motion by Mr. Sheridan for an Account of Monies issued to the King of Prussia. Parliament prorogued. Changes in Administration. Military Transactions. Landreci captured by the Allies. Battle of Fleurus. Continued Successes of the French. General Pichegru crosses the Maese and the Waal. Disastrous Retreat of the English Army. Amsterdam surrenders to the Conqueror. Campaign in Spain—and in Italy. Naval Transactions. Conquest of Martinico, of St. Lucia and Guadaloupe—also of Port au Prince in St. Domingo. Guadaloupe recaptured. Conquest

of Corsica. King of Great Britain accepts the Gift of the Crown of Corsica from a Corsican Convention. Victory obtained over the Brest Fleet by Lord Howe. Proceedings of the French Convention. Fall of Robespierre. Arrival of Mr. Jay, Ambassador Extraordinary from America to the Court of London. Emigrations to America. Trials in Scotland for High Treason. Pretended Plot to assassinate the King. Trials of Hardy, &c. for High Treason. Mr. Pitt examined as an Evidence. His incredible Want of Recollection. Lord Macartney's Embassy to China. Death of Sir Wm. Jones. Transactions in Poland—Final Partition of that Kingdom. Political Occurrences in America. Mr. Monroe nominated Ambassador to France. His cordial Reception in that Country.

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Session of
Parliament.

THE SESSION of PARLIAMENT opened January 21, 1794. The king declared "the circumstances under which they were assembled, to require the most serious attention. We are," said he, "engaged in a contest, on the issue of which depend the maintenance of our constitution, laws, and religion, and the security of all civil society." His majesty observed with satisfaction the advantageous change which had taken place in Europe since the commencement of the war. —"The circumstances by which the further progress of the allies has been hitherto impeded not only," said the monarch, "prove the necessity of vigor and perseverance on our part, but, at the same time, *confirm the expectation of* ULTIMATE SUCCESS. Our enemies have derived the means of *temporary exertion* from a system which

has enabled them to dispose arbitrarily of the lives and properties of a numerous people, and which openly violates every restraint of justice, humanity, and religion. But these effects have also tended rapidly to exhaust the natural and real strength of the country.”—His majesty declared, “that he reflected with unspeakable satisfaction on the steady loyalty and firm attachment to the established constitution and government which, notwithstanding the continued efforts employed to mislead and seduce, had been so generally prevalent among all ranks of his people.”

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The addresses moved in answer to the speech gave occasion to very warm and animated debates in both houses. In that of the peers, the earl of Guildford, son of the late celebrated minister, lord North, observed, “That the object of the war appeared, in the short time that had elapsed since its commencement, to be totally changed. It was at first affirmed to be the protection of our allies and the security of this realm; it now appeared to be the restoration of the French monarchy. The French had, in the course of the last summer, been repeatedly depressed and defeated: was it not probable, therefore, that they would, in these circumstances, have listened to such pacific terms as it became the dignity and justice of this nation to

Debates on
the address.

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offer?" His lordship thought it reasonable to inquire, whether we had not attained the end originally proposed, after which his majesty's ministers had solemnly declared their intention to pursue every method for obtaining peace? He combated the opinion that the French had made efforts which they could not repeat; and he asked whether ministers had calculated the resources necessary for subduing them. As to the danger apprehended from the dissemination of French principles, they certainly were not to be prevented by the sword. This could be counteracted effectually only by an impression upon the minds of the people of the blessings they derived from their own constitution. His lordship, in conclusion, submitted to the house an amendment to the address, " imploring his majesty to seize the earliest opportunity to terminate hostilities by an honorable peace." The amendment was ably supported by the earls of Derby and Lauderdale, the duke of Norfolk, and the marquis of Lansdown. The secretary of state, lord Grenville, in reply, entered into a long account of the contentions and miseries of the French.—" It was by terror alone that the French were governed; the consequence must soon be that they would rise to oppose it. We had no security for a permanent peace." His lordship concluded by expressing, in the words

of his majesty's speech, his perfect confidence of ultimate success against France.—On the division, the voices in favor of the amendment were twelve only to ninety-seven against it.

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A similar amendment was moved in the house of commons by the earl of Wycomb, son to the marquis of Lansdown, and opposed by the earl of Mornington in a speech of great length and elaboration, stating in very forcible language, though in tedious and disgusting detail, the miserable condition of that oppressed and distracted country; and reprobating, with just indignation, the extravagances and crimes which had disgraced the conduct of the existing government both in its moral and political capacity.—

As an encouragement to the British parliament to continue the contest, his lordship entered into a minute investigation of the finances of France, hazarding, in this part of his oration, some very extraordinary positions. The annual expenditure of France upon the scale of the last year, this nobleman affirmed, would amount to two hundred and sixteen millions sterling, which, he said, exceeded the total collective annual income of the individuals of that country no less than ninety-six millions. He said that the Convention, under the pretence and name of financial operations, had committed direct acts of bankruptcy; that public credit was no more; that

the *certain* effect of the measures adopted by the Convention must be to annihilate the stock still remaining of all the necessities of life in France, and to hasten the moment when it will be *impossible* for the government either to subsist the people at home, or even to maintain an army upon the frontier; that the resources of the country are exhausting, not slowly and gradually, but with a rapidity and violence which at once dissolved the very elements of the system of political economy; and his lordship pronounced that such unnatural exertions, with their monstrous effects, *must* ultimately yield to a steady and unremitting exertion of our natural and genuine strength, confirmed by the co-operation of our numerous allies. He deprecated, therefore, any attempt towards a negotiation for peace, as it would imply, in actual circumstances, the relinquishing all hope of *indemnity* for the hazard and expense of the war: and recommended in terms of great earnestness, a vigorous and unremitting prosecution of hostilities.—This speech appeared, from the continued marks of applause which accompanied the delivery of it, to be in perfect unison with the feelings and sentiments of the house. Lord Mornington was set up as the hero of the day, and obtained an easy victory over the ideal republic which he had thus depicted.

Mr. Sheridan remarked in reply, that his majesty had warned the house, in his gracious speech from the throne, to keep in sight the real grounds and origin of the war. By the real grounds of the war doubtless his majesty alluded to the fatal means by which both the king and the nation had been ensnared into it, namely by repeated declamations on all that the phrenzy, the folly, and rashness of individuals in France, had either said or written, by which the passions of this country could be roused or their fears excited. And what was the sum?—that enormities were committed there which sickened and disgusted the soul. But was this difficult to be accounted for? The surrounding states had goaded them into a paroxysm of madness and desperation; and, at length, they had turned upon us with the fury which we had inspired. But far from being desirous, in the origin or progress of the revolution, unnecessarily to involve themselves with England, the strongest reproach which the different factions could throw out against each other was the accusation of having been accessory to a war which all parties were anxious to avoid. This appeared by the noble lord's quotations from the famous pamphlet of M. Brissot.

“We continue to reproach the French,” said Mr. Sheridan, “for injustice and insolence in

BOOK the conduct of the war : But what has been the
 XX. conduct of Great Britain ? What has been the
 1794. language she has held to Genoa, to Switzerland, to Tuscany, and, as far as she dared, to Denmark and Sweden ?—She wished to embark the whole world in the confederacy against France the moment she thought proper to join it ; and the neutrality of which she herself boasted but a month before became instantly a heinous crime in any other state of Europe.”

Mr. Sheridan noticed, in sarcastic terms, the disparity between the *motives* and the *object* of the war, as stated by the minister. The motives or causes urged in justification of the war were certain specific injuries and insults offered to Great Britain and her ally the republic of Holland, the offensive conduct of the Convention, and the opening of the Scheld : but the object of the war was the preservation of social order, of regular government, of morals, and religion. Had the French offered adequate reparation for the special offences alleged on our part, we should, it seems, have remained idle spectators of the mighty conflict in which the interests of the whole world were involved, reclining, in luxurious ease, on our commercial couch, and have left the cause of social order, government, morality, and religion, to owe its preservation to the exertions of Sarmatian and Hungarian

barbarians. No; he would not do the minister the injustice to suppose that he was induced to become a party in this great warfare by any personal or petty provocation; he was, doubtless, actuated chiefly and primarily by the nobler motive of defending the cause of humanity itself against the common enemy of human kind. Which party first said the words "We are at war" was, therefore, a trivial consideration. Every fact proved it to be a war of choice on the part of the government of Great Britain, and from that responsibility the minister neither CAN NOR SHALL disengage himself.

Mr. Sheridan then adverted to the probability of ultimate success in the war, as held out in his majesty's speech, and re-echoed by the noble lord. Our first expectations (said he) were founded upon the great body of French royalists, who were now destroyed and annihilated. Our second hope was derived from the conflict of the opposite factions: but what has happened?—that conflict has been decided, and the conquering party, supposed the weaker, has exercised the powers of government with still more energy and success than their predecessors. After a succession of bloody and obstinate battles, the invaders of France have been driven back by armies composed chiefly of raw and unpractised

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has she shewn the slightest disposition to contribute any thing to the common cause but her praises and her prayers?

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The noble lord, said Mr. Sheridan, overlooking the imperious necessity of circumstances, thinks it fair and candid to contrast the proceedings of the French Convention, relative to matters of supply and finance, with the proceedings of the British minister and the British parliament on the same subject;—certainly the contrast is obvious, and long may it continue so. But the noble lord pursues his triumph rather too far, when he endeavours to impress it more forcibly on our minds by making a regular speech for our chancellor of the Exchequer, and exultingly demanding what we should say if his right honourable friend were to come down and propose to this house such ways and means as the minister of finance in France is compelled to resort to? What should we think if he were to rise and propose that all persons who had money or property in an unproductive state should lend it without interest to the public;—that all who had accumulated fortunes out of the bounty of the state should refund what they had received;—or, finally, that all persons possessing great estates should relinquish the produce of them during the war, reserving to themselves only a bare and moderate subsistence? Sir, I agree

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with the noble lord, that if his right honorable friend were to come down to us with any such propositions, he would not long retain his present situation. There is, therefore, no great danger that the experiment will be made. No, sir; from the modesty and prudence of our present minister, I should augur a very different speech from that which the noble lord has provided for him.—Comparing himself and his own measures with the character and conduct of his rival, he might, without too great an assumption of merit, say, ‘Do I demand of you, wealthy citizens, to lend your hoards to government without interest? On the contrary, when I come to propose a loan, there is not a man of you to whom I shall not hold out an usurious profit upon every pound you devote to the necessities of your country.—Do I demand of you, my fellow-placemen and brother-pensioners, that you should appropriate any part of your stipends to the public exigencies? On the contrary, am I not daily increasing your numbers and your emoluments? Do I require of you, my latest and most zealous proselytes, that you should make any temporary sacrifices in support of a war, on the success of which you profess to believe that the salvation of Britain and of Europe, and of civilized society itself, depends? No, gentlemen, I scorn to

take advantage of your eagerness and your zeal; and, to prove that I do not suspect them to want such a test, I will make your interest to coincide with your principle. Instead of calling upon you to contribute to the public revenue, I will quarter some of you upon it; and however deeply absorbed in patriotic apprehensions, I will *force* upon others the favorite objects of their personal vanity and ambition."

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The wit and spirit of this brilliant reply excited the involuntary admiration of the house, which, nevertheless, unhappily remained unimpressed by the force and weight of its arguments. The debate was long protracted, and the house, at a very late hour, divided; for the question 279, against it 61 voices.

In the upper house, the customary address passed with little opposition; but, on the 17th of February, the marquis of Lansdown, in a speech replete with sound reasoning, information, and eloquence, moved an address of another description, "to represent to his majesty the extreme improbability of conquering France; that the dismemberment of France, if attainable, would augment the strength of the powers most to be dreaded; that opinions cannot be controlled by arms; that experience has demonstrated the futility of every attempt to interfere in the internal government of France, even if the justice

Pacific motion of the marquis of Lansdown.

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1794. were problematical ; and that we must incur the keenest reproaches, if we encouraged farther revolts in a country where we had been unable to save those who put confidence in us from extermination and ruin—therefore to implore his majesty to declare, without delay, his disposition to make peace upon such just, disinterested, and liberal terms, as were calculated to render the peace lasting ; and that he would signify this intention to his allies, that a stop might be put to the effusion of human blood.”

His lordship took a very masterly and comprehensive view of the situations, resources, and political objects of the several European states.—“ Whether we looked (said this able and eminent statesman) to our confederacy on the one hand, or to the neutral powers whom we had irritated on the other, it was impossible to perceive any ground of hope. France, by the pressure of the allies upon her frontier, had become a school of military wonder ; and if other governments persevered in their design of thus goading her to almost præternatural exertions, we should see a military republic firmly established in the heart of Europe. The enthusiasm of war has entered into every sentiment and feeling of the soul ; but this enthusiasm originated in that of liberty, and the whole country is taught that their sole occupation and passion ought to be

arms, because their only good and blessing is liberty.—Such being the state of the war, his lordship asked Whether it was reasonable to persevere in it? Whether, upon the principle avowed, we ought to succeed? Whether, by the treaties we had made, we were likely to do so? and, above all, Whether the war did not tend to produce consequences fatal to the interests of this country, to those of Europe, and to the general liberties of mankind? In looking to the future fortune of the war, his lordship adverted to the condition of Holland, comparing her present backwardness with her former glorious struggles, and said it exhibited the difference between men when engaged in defence of their own liberties, and when drawn in to fight with others against their will.—In allusion to the declaration of lord Grenville on a former occasion, that security and indemnity were the objects of the war, his lordship said, that it was not the trash of indemnity we ought to pursue; the true object of British policy at this moment was to conciliate France, and restore peace to the world. Treat with the French people, no matter for the name. If our intentions are wise and disinterested, there can be little to settle, and in that would lie our great security. The marquis recommended, as an example to this country in its intercourse with France, the mag-

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nanimous conduct of Louis IX. during the civil wars in the reign of Henry III. Were we to manifest sentiments of kindness and generosity, and a desire of peace towards the French, they would evince the same. They had always been against a war with England. Mutual rancor (his lordship said) had been excited by mutual invectives. This he earnestly wished to avoid; and that we should behave nobly, not seeking to derive profit from the misfortunes of our neighbours."

The motion was seconded by the duke of Grafton, who had for many years retired from public life, but who now deemed it incumbent upon him to stand forward and bear his decided testimony against the present fatally destructive system of administration. And his grace's sentiments derived great weight and interest, not merely from the unblemished integrity of his character, but the advantage he possessed of that practical wisdom which is the result of long experience in affairs, matured by deep and dispassionate reflection. His grace noticed his long absence from the house, and said, He did not flatter himself with the expectation of making any considerable impression upon their lordships, or of effecting, by the observations he had to offer, any material alteration of sentiment. But he hoped, that, by a constant and unre-

mitted attention to their duty, he, and those few with whom he acted, might, in the end, accomplish their object, which was to restore to their country the blessings of peace. He recollected on a former occasion, that a minority, small in number at the first, long reviled, treated with scorn and contempt, did, by perseverance and firmness, at length convert their minority into a majority, and put an end to the American war.—His grace said, he firmly believed that the motion before the house was calculated to promote the real welfare of the country; and that, if right measures had been adopted, a torrent of blood might have been spared. The misfortunes in which we were involved had their origin in a doctrine new to him, which was that of implicit confidence in his majesty's ministers; but the greater the confidence placed in them, the greater must be the ultimate responsibility, and they might on a future day be called to answer to their injured country for the difficulties and distresses in which they had, by their ill-judged and impolitic measures, involved her. The present war (his grace said) was undefined in its principle and object. It was what political writers termed *bellum internecionis*—a war of extermination. In such a war are we plunged by the temerity of a minister, who, twelve months before, predicted a continuance of peace

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1794. for fifteen years; and twelve millions of additional debt has been contracted, instead of that diminution of the public burdens of which he had held out the false and fallacious prospect. His grace declared, that he certainly did not mean to recommend the violation of our treaties, nor the desertion of our allies; if wisdom presided in our councils, and proper terms were offered to the French, the result would, he doubted not, be happy: but a continuance of the present war, upon the principle on which it was now carried on, threatened his majesty's throne and government, and the safety and prosperity of the British nation.

The secretary of state, lord Grenville, concluded a debate of great length, by pronouncing the motion before the house to be ill-timed, inexpedient, and impracticable: whatever, as his lordship thought fit to express himself, might be the MOTIVE for bringing it forward, he rejoiced in the discussion, as it would impress on the parliament and the people the real principles of the war; it would remind them how much they had at stake in the event, and how necessary it was to prosecute it vigorously. He was astonished to see two such men as the noble marquis and duke propose a negotiation for peace without stating any ground on which it could be effected with security. He asked, if either of the noble

lords would be negotiator on this occasion, and whether they would assert there was a man in France who had the power to treat with them. BOOK
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SECURITY was the object of the war; but parliament would not, he was persuaded, call upon ministers to declare the degree of security they required, or in what specific mode it was to be obtained. This depended upon a variety of casual circumstances and fluctuating events. He denied the impregnability of the frontier of France, and vindicated the conduct of ministers towards the neutral nations on the ground of political necessity. His lordship affirmed our commerce to be flourishing, our manufactures increasing, and our revenue prosperous; and expressed his surprise that the noble lords who supported the motion had not brought forward any specific proposal to obviate the difficulties which impeded a negotiation. In the course of a long speech, similar in all respects to his former effusions on the same subject, excepting that all mention of INDEMNITY was omitted, his lordship ran over the catalogue of his common places; while, such is the wonderful effect of prejudice, the house listened with favorable attention, as if he had been uttering oracles of wisdom. On a division there appeared—for the motion 13; against it 103.

The horrible severity of the sentences passed

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upon the Scottish delinquents, Muir, Palmer, &c. even admitting the conviction to be legal and just, was so flagrant as to excite great attention; and Mr. Adam, a Scottish advocate of great professional ability, on the 4th of February brought forward a motion in the house of commons tending to a revision of the Scottish law of sedition, with a view to assimilate it more nearly to the mild and equitable system of English jurisprudence; but this generous attempt was negatived by a majority of 126 to 31 voices.

Investigation of the conduct of the Scottish judges.

It was a matter of very great doubt whether, barbarous as the law of Scotland appeared to be, the Court of Justiciary had not exceeded the limits of their power in substituting the punishment of transportation for that of banishment, imposed by the act of queen Anne, for the offence charged upon the above-named gentlemen, whose character in private life, however mistaken in their public opinions and conduct, was admitted to be in the highest degree respectable. Mr. Adam therefore moved (March 10th), for a copy of the record to be laid before the house, upon the ground of which he meant to question the legality of the sentence; and if his arguments prevailed with the house, as no appeal could lie from the conviction, he should propose an address to his majesty in favor of these unfortunate men. After a masterly legal discussion

of the question, Mr. Adam made a sudden transition to the equity and humanity of the proceeding, addressing himself very powerfully to the feelings of the house? "What (said he) is the crime? Misdemeanor. What is the punishment? Transportation; and that the most aggravated and afflicting known to the law—to a desolate island, an inhospitable desert at the extremity of the earth, where all is rude and barbarous, where they must be deprived of all communication with intelligent beings like themselves, where they can find no social pleasure, but are condemned to live with ruffians whom the sword of justice has spared." The motion was opposed by the lord advocate of Scotland, who praised the Scottish criminal code in high terms, as "much superior to that of England, and far better adapted to the suppression of sedition. As to the latitude which had been objected against, in charging Mr. Muir, it was, his lordship affirmed, impossible to be perfectly accurate in points of time, or to state all, and the particular words which he had uttered on each particular occasion. According to the laws of Scotland, it was not necessary as it was in the English law, to find out every part connected with the point at issue. The prosecutor was not bound to prove what he stated specifically. It was enough to prove what the nature of the

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XX. evidence of speech, words, or letters."

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Mr. Whitbread said, he had never, on any occasion heard, since he had occupied a seat in that house, a speech which so much excited his indignation as that of the lord advocate; and he hesitated not to declare, that if the law of Scotland was such as represented by the learned lord, it was the law of tyranny and oppression, and it was absurd to speak of personal liberty in that country. There were those who asserted, that the laws of England were too light; that adequate punishment was not here inflicted on the seditious. But if the ministers of this country should dare to introduce into it the laws of Scotland, he trusted that there would be found men bold enough to impeach them.

Mr. Pitt, in conclusion, declared, "that in his opinion, no *doubt* could be entertained either of the legality of the trials, or the propriety with which the lords of justiciary had exercised their discretion on that occasion;" and the question was lost on a division of 172 against 32 voices*.

* Whether any *doubt* could be properly entertained of the legality of the sentences passed by the Scottish judges, may best be resolved by referring to the statute of queen Anne, upon which the several indictments were founded. It is dated Sept. 16, 1703, and is as follows:

"Our sovereign lady considering that by the acts of parlia-

On the 25th March, Mr. Adam introduced a third motion, supported by a strong chain of facts and reasonings, relative to the regulation of the justiciary courts of Scotland, purporting to bring their general practice nearer to that of the English courts. But Mr. Secretary Dundas

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ment following, viz.—The act of James I, Parliament 2, Cap. 43, intituled, ‘Leasing-makers, Tines, Life, and Goods,’ &c. &c. the crimes therein mentioned are made capital, and punishable by death and confiscation; and that the said laws have been liable to stretches, and that in respect of their generality, and the various construction which the same may admit, they may be; as to the foresaid capital punishment, of dangerous consequence: doth therefore, with advice and consent of the estates of Parliament, abrogate and discharge, in all time coming, the aforesaid sanction and pain of death and confiscation, contained in the said acts and statutes; and ordains, that the punishment of the crimes therein mentioned, shall for hereafter only be arbitrary, according to the demerit of the transgression, that is, by fining, imprisonment, or banishment; or if the party offender be poor and not able to pay a fine, then to be punished in his body, life and limb always preserved.” Certainly the wise and benevolent framers of this law never intended, or could by any possibility imagine, that any person convicted under it should, under the general idea of banishment, be sentenced to fourteen years residence among savages and felons, in a desolate wilderness on the other side of the globe; because this is a punishment worse than death. And surely, an arbitrary power of fine, imprisonment, and banishment in the mildest sense of the term, might suffice, not merely for any purpose of civil policy, but to gratify any ordinary thirst of vengeance,

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affirmed, “ that the Scottish nation was very happy under its own laws, and that the alterations proposed would be a violation of the articles of the union. The reform really wanting, he said, was to assimilate the English law of sedition in a certain degree to that of Scotland. Notwithstanding the menacing language he had recently heard in that house this he dared to say, because he dared to think it.” On the division the motion was negatived by a majority of 77 to 24 voices.

Debates on
the landing
of foreign
troops in the
kingdom.

Early in the session Mr. Dundas had brought a message from his majesty, stating, that a corps of Hessians employed in his service having been brought to the coast on the Isle of Wight to prevent sickness on board the transports, his majesty had given orders they should be quartered in the island.—This corps constituted a part of the army destined to co-operate with the French royalists in La Vendée, under the command of the earl of Moira, the object of whose important expedition was defeated by the mismanagement and procrastination of the cabinet. The house thanked his majesty for the communication: but as it seemed that the ministers of the crown meant to pass silently over this transaction, which, though circumstances might render it proper, was in a constitutional view alarming, Mr. Grey, on the 10th of February, called the

attention of the house to the subject in a speech replete with historic, parliamentary, and constitutional information, clearly proving that the measure in question was contrary both to the letter and the spirit of the constitution, as established at the Revolution; and that, whenever such a measure became necessary, ministers should either obtain the previous consent of parliament, or resort to a bill of indemnity. Mr. Grey concluded by moving, "that to employ foreigners in any situation of military trust, or to bring foreign troops into this kingdom without the consent of parliament first had and obtained, is contrary to law." The motion was strongly supported by Mr. Whitbread, lord John Cavendish, and Mr. Francis; the latter of whom forcibly asked, "If it was lawful to bring in 4,000 Hessians to-day, why not 10,000 Austrians to-morrow, and 20,000 Russians the day following?"

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Mr. Fox hoped that Englishmen would look to the consequences of this doctrine, and said, that were he to chuse whether the king should possess the power of introducing foreign troops into the kingdom in time of peace or in time of war, he should much prefer the former, as the exercise of so alarming and exorbitant a prerogative would be more likely to rouse the nation to a general opposition and resistance. Mr. Pitt maintained that his majesty did most un-

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questionably possess the prerogative in question, and the remedy for any supposed danger was for the house to withhold the supplies for the payment of troops. Mr. Serjeant Adair, one of the most respectable of the party styled Alarmists, admitted that the king had no power to introduce foreign troops into the kingdom ; he was a friend to the principle, but not to the form of the motion : he therefore moved the previous question, which was carried by 134 against 35 voices.

The more the great constitutional axiom moved by Mr. Grey was considered, the more reason there was to be dissatisfied at the manner in which it was evaded ; especially when the first minister of the crown, by his daring avowal of the prerogative in question, seemed to aim at the establishment of it to all future times, in consequence of the precedent now made. Mr. Grey, therefore, on the 14th of March, again brought the subject before the house in a somewhat different form. He controverted in the strongest terms, the opinion given in the former debate by the chancellor of the Exchequer, which, coming from such authority, he regarded as of the utmost importance. Mr. Grey said, that he was far from calling in question the propriety or necessity of landing the Hessians ; but he could never suffer it to be advanced, as a principle of

the constitution, that the king had a right to introduce foreign troops into the kingdom as a regular branch of the royal prerogative. On the contrary, the letter, spirit, and practice of the constitution, all militated against it. He referred to the Act of Settlement, by which no foreigner could possibly hold any office of civil or military trust in this kingdom. But was not every officer of an army of foreigners in a place of military trust? These foreigners were not even under any military law in this country; for as to them, the Mutiny Act had no force or operation. From the instant they landed here they were, *ipso facto*, discharged; they could not, by the law of this country, exist for a moment as an army, and if they deserted or disobeyed there was no statute on which they could be tried. Mr. Grey also referred to the famous case of the Dutch Guards in the reign of king William, and to the peremptory refusal of the house of commons to admit of their remaining in England, notwithstanding the great constitutional services they had performed. And he protested that he had no other view in the measure he meant to propose than the guarding against the establishment of a dangerous doctrine, and a dangerous precedent. He concluded with moving for a bill of indemnity, in which he was seconded by Mr. Francis.

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A second vehement debate ensued, in the course of which Mr. Sheridan, with his accustomed and characteristic animation, declared, that to look into books in order to demonstrate the illegality of so monstrous a claim was a mere waste of time. Common sense was sufficient to shew that it could not exist. If at any future interval, when the vigilance of that house slumbered, advantage was taken to land an army of foreigners in the kingdom for unlawful or injurious purposes, would it be pretended that the responsibility of ministers was a sufficient security against the danger? While the house were voting impeachments they might meet the advanced guard of the enemy in the lobby.

Mr. Fox affirmed, that if the introduction of foreign troops into this country was legal, to talk of liberty was absurd, to speak of a free constitution was weakness. And Mr. William Smith remarked, that no constitution could contain a principle which was *felo de se*, which struck at its vital part, and endangered its very existence. Mr. Pitt persisted obstinately in his opinion, or at least his assertion, that it was legal and constitutional to introduce foreign troops into the kingdom without the previous consent of parliament; and said, he was yet ignorant what positive law it contravened, what precedents it violated, or what course of practice

it traversed.—This doctrine was heard with apparent indignation by divers of the ministerial party themselves. Mr. Yorke, member for the county of Cambridge, in particualar, observing, “that if his majesty had such a prerogative, the House of Commons could not be too soon employed in retrenching it.” The Attorney General declared himself by no means prepared to assert the existence of such a prerogative, and deprecated any farther discussion of the question. Notwithstanding this seeming defection, the numbers, on the division, were, 41 only in favor of the motion, to 170 who opposed it.

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The earl of Albemarle, in an able and constitutional speech, the first which he delivered in parliament, brought forward a motion similar to that of Mr. Grey. His lordship noticed the Bill of Indemnity introduced under the administration of lord North, which passed in the commons, and was lost in the lords, merely from the objection made by the marquis of Rockingham to the preamble, in which it was stated “that DOUBTS had arisen, &c.” whereas the marquis declared that no doubts had existed, or could exist, as to the pretended right of the crown to land foreign troops in the kingdom.—The motion was supported by the earls of Lauderdale and Guildford, the marquis of Lansdown and the duke of Bedford. Lord Romney,

BOOK XX. 1794. who now usually voted with the court, testified as to the share which he had borne respecting the former bill of indemnity. At that time, his lordship said, it was not even pretended that to introduce and employ foreign troops in any part of the king's dominions was legal and constitutional; the only difficulty which arose related to the wording of the preamble in such a way as not to throw a doubt upon the principle. Lord Grenville himself was far from taking up the question in the same high tone with Mr. Pitt. His lordship declared, he saw no use in agitating abstract propositions in parliament, and that it would be better for the country if the question were left open, and ministers remained subject, as at present, to the eventual responsibility of abusing a power, the exercise of which was admitted to be occasionally necessary. In these sentiments the other lords in administration, lord Hawkesbury, lord Auckland, &c. seemed to concur; and the bill was upon this ground merely rejected, though the lords Stanhope and Radnor signed a protest against the decision of the house. Upon the whole, and on a general review of the debates in parliament respecting this great constitutional question, Mr. Pitt appears to have been the only man who took a decided part against the interests of his country.

About this period of the session the chancellor

of the Exchequer moved, in the Committee of Supply, that the treaty between his majesty and the king of Sardinia be referred to the said committee. Conformably to the tenor of this singular treaty, Great Britain, it will be recollected, was pledged to pay to his Sardinian majesty the sum of 200,000*l.* to be employed in the defence of his own dominions; and also not to make any peace with France of which the restoration of Savoy, and his other conquered territories, was not a preliminary article; although it never had been pretended that Savoy was an object of sufficient consequence to involve England in a war with France, and the English court had even made a boast of its neutrality subsequent to the acquisition of that duchy by the arms of the republic. The resolution enabling his majesty to make good this rash and romantic treaty passed without a formal division, though it excited the severe and poignant animadversions of the members in opposition.

The military and naval force voted for the service of the year amounted to more than 250,000 men, including about 35,000 foreigners; and a new loan was created of 11,000,000*l.* three-per-cents. and 2,750,000*l.* four-per-cents. with the addition of a temporary annuity of about one-half per cent. for 11,000,000*l.* actually borrowed by the government.

Annual statement of finance.

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A bill introduced by Mr. Wilberforce, for abolishing that part of the slave-trade which related to the supply of foreign plantations, passed

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Bill for the partial abolition of the slave-trade —rejected.

the house of commons under the insidious patronage of Mr. Pitt, but was thrown out in the lords in consequence of the avowed disapprobation of lord Grenville, who was, however, pleased to profess himself an advocate for the principle of the bill, which was (he said) ill-timed pending the inquiry instituted in that house respecting the general question; and in this miserable subterfuge he was seconded by Horsley, bishop of Rochester.

Increase of the land forces.

On the 22d of February a message was delivered from the king, purporting, that the avowed intentions of the enemy to invade this country made an increase of the land-forces necessary: and an address was voted by the house, assuring his majesty “of their zealous concurrence in every exertion which became a brave and loyal people in the prosecution of this just and necessary war.” So soon were the lofty and boastful predictions of ministers falsified, and their pride humbled, by a change of fortune of which they would not previously suppose the possibility. A great augmentation of the militia, and an addition of volunteer fencible corps, were accordingly voted, and the dangerous and doubtful expedient resorted to of soliciting voluntary contributions, by a formal letter written by the

Voluntary contributions.

secretary of state to the lords-lieutenants of the several counties of the kingdom. This subject was brought by Mr. Sheridan in a regular mode before the house, and reprobated by him and the members of opposition in general as a gross violation of the principles of the constitution and of the privileges of that house. But his reasonings, if not confuted, were set at rest, by moving, as usual upon all inconvenient and troublesome propositions, the previous question.

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On the 6th of March Mr. Whitbread moved an address to the king, strongly expressive of disapprobation of the conduct of ministers, and of those measures which had preceded and succeeded the declaration of war—lamenting that his majesty should have been advised to make a common cause with powers whose objects are undefined, but who, as there is much ground to fear, prosecute the war with views and for purposes solemnly disavowed by his majesty, and abhorrent to the principles of a free nation; and stating, that the restoration of Savoy was not of sufficient importance to be made a condition of peace; and requesting his majesty to extricate himself from his present engagements, as they prevented his concluding a separate peace.—As to the virulent invectives so indiscriminately employed against the French, Mr. Whitbread reminded the house that epithets no

Addresses
for peace
moved by
Mr. Whit-
bread and
the earl of
Guildford.

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less opprobrious had been bestowed, as history evinced, on some of the greatest and best of men by some of the vilest and the worst--by Philip II. of Spain, against the prince of Orange; and, in our memory, by the infamous sycophants of power, against a Franklin and a Washington. Was any man, he asked, so weak as to doubt the resources of France when he contemplated the efforts made by America? Against an armed nation enthusiasts in the cause of liberty, Mr. Whitbread said, it was in vain to combine, and in the midst of our pretended successes we were called upon to make an extraordinary provision for our internal safety. He lamented the glorious and enviable situation of which his majesty had been deprived by the evil counsels of his ministers. Instead of being involved in a ruinous and hopeless war, he might at this moment have been the arbiter of peace to Europe: and the unfortunate Louis would, in all probability, have been indebted to the friendly mediation which he requested for the preservation of his throne and life. The motion was negatived, after a warm debate, by a very great majority.--A similar motion, brought forward by the earl of Guildford in the house of lords, was opposed by lord Hawkesbury, who characteristically declared, that, far from objecting to the treaties already made, he only wished

there were more, and should rejoice if there was not a neutral power in Europe. He justified the treaty with Sardinia, and maintained the perfect consistency of ministers, who had, in his opinion, acted in a manner highly meritorious. The motion of lord Guildford was rejected by the usual majority.

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The melancholy situation of general La Fayette and his companions, La Tour Maubourg and Bureaux de Pusy, who since their flight and capture by the Austrians on neutral ground, and their subsequent *transfer* to Prussia, had been groaning under the most oppressive cruelty in the dungeons of Magdeburg, exciting the compassion of many respectable persons, general Fitzpatrick humanely and generously moved in the house of commons, on the 17th of March, for an address to the throne, beseeching his majesty to intercede with the court of Berlin in their favor. The general remarked, that La Fayette suffered for his attachment to the constitutional monarchy which we now wished to restore; in this cause nobly venturing his life and sacrificing his fortune; and he enlarged on the merits and services of that unfortunate person as far overbalancing any errors with which he might be chargeable.---It appeared that the king of Prussia being applied to for the release of La Fayette, had answered, that he was

Motion in
favor of La
Fayette, by
general Fitz-
patrick.

BOOK not his prisoner alone, but that of the Con-
XX. federate Powers jointly, and that he could be set
1794. at liberty only by the consent of all.

Mr. Pitt opposed the motion as equally improper and unnecessary, and denied that M. la Fayette's conduct was ever friendly to the genuine cause of liberty; nor would he admit that he deserved well of either country; and he affirmed, that the interference required would be setting up ourselves as guardians of the consciences of foreign states.

Mr. Burke seconded Mr. Pitt in a speech of barbarous violence. He described M. la Fayette as the origin and author of all the calamities which had taken place in France, and he exultingly declared that no country claimed him but to inflict upon him the punishment due to a traitor.

Mr. Courtney, in answer to these reflections, observed, that as well might all the atrocities of the civil war of the last century in this country be charged upon Hampden and his illustrious associates, as those committed in France upon M. la Fayette. Why endeavour to steel the hearts of the house against an unhappy captive, perishing in the dungeons of Magdeburg? In their eagerness to support the war, some gentlemen seemed to fear nothing but the enthusiasm of liberty, while despots might, for aught they

cared, carry misery and anarchy through the world. Popular commotion was like a tempest, violent but of short duration : Sometimes too it purified the air ; and he would rather be exposed to the utmost fury of the storm, than consent to breathe the pestilential atmosphere of despotism.

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The motion was negatived by a majority of more than an hundred voices, by the influence of the minister merely ; for the feelings of the house were evidently interested in favor of the victim of Austrian perfidy. It was, however, strongly suspected that neither the king of Prussia, or the emperor, was the monarch in Europe the most averse to M. la Fayette's restoration to the blessings of freedom—those blessings of which he had been so instrumental to the establishment in America.

On the 10th of April, major Maitland, brother to the earl of Lauderdale, moved for a committee of the whole house to inquire into the causes of the failure at Dunkirk and the evacuation of Toulon, which he enforced by a speech containing severe animadversions on the conduct and policy of administration.

Motion for
an enquiry
into the
losses on the
continent, by
major Mait-
land.

Mr. Jenkinson, son of lord Hawkesbury, rose in opposition to the motion, and took a retrospective view of the transactions of the last campaign, which (he said) not only demonstrated

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the valor of the British troops, but the wisdom of the British councils. He affirmed that this country could not think of peace till the government of France, if it deserved the name, was annihilated; and it was the duty of his majesty's ministers to assist *every* party that should arise to overturn it. He was ready to confess, indeed, that government to be strong; but, paradoxically speaking, the stronger it was, so much the more easy was it to be destroyed. The Jacobin Club at Paris gave the tone to the whole kingdom:—let that club, then, be destroyed, and universal consternation and confusion would follow. This event could only be accomplished *by marching directly to PARIS*: a measure which his lordship asserted to be, in his opinion, very easy and practicable. But first it would be necessary to take some strong towns on the frontier, in order to open the communication with the inhabitants, who would be glad of the opportunity of flying from anarchy and despotism*.

* A comment equally amusing and instructive upon the system of those great politicians who *advised* the overthrow of the French republican government by marching directly to Paris, may be found in the celebrated Rabelais, book i. chap. 33. entitled, “How certain governors of king Picrochöle, by their rash counsels, run him into the utmost danger.” These governors were, it seems, the duke of Menreail, earl Spadasin, and captain Merdaille, who, by engaging him in a war with Grand-

Mr. Pitt objected to the motion, on account of the great *inconveniences* of inquiry, which he affirmed to be of such magnitude that they ought never to be hazarded except when the failures were of a nature to attach incapacity to the character of ministers, or to occasion distrust of the general system which they had adopted : but the failures which had taken place, he sub-

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gousier, promised to make him the greatest prince since Alexander of Macedon. Picrochole, flattered by this, bids them put on their hats, and tell him how. They propose leaving a small garrison at home, to march one army immediately to Grandgousier, and destroy him ; another to go to Gascony, and capture all the towns, castles, and strong places, in their way. Thence to take Spain and Portugal, and erect two columns much more durable than those of Hercules, in honor of his majesty's name. Moreover, the Straits should be called the Picrocholine Straits. After this Barbary and Italy were to be conquered—Picrochole protesting, by the bye, that he would upon no account kiss the pope's slipper. " But in the mean time," says Picrochole, " what becomes of the first army after defeating that devilish fellow Grandgousier ?" ' Why, sir,' reply the governors, ' re-assembling in Bohemia, they vanquish Norway, Sweden, Gothland, and so up to the Frozen Ocean ; whence, by way of Lithuania and Bulgaria, they proceed directly to Constantinople.' " I'll go there myself," cries Picrochole, " for I have a mind to be emperor of Trebizonde. All I fear is that infernal Grandgousier." ' Don't fear him,' said Spadasin, ' for Russia shall send in a moment to your assistance 450,000 chosen troops.' " Come on then," exclaimed Picrochole, " see that every thing be got ready, and let those who love me follow me."

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 1794. mitted to the house, were far from amounting to this.—A direct negative was consequently put upon the motion, by a majority of 133 voices.

Early in this month Mr. Dundas brought forward his annual statement of the finances of India. He represented, as usual, the prosperous condition of the Company, the increase of their commerce, their investments, and their revenues, and drew a flattering picture of their opulence and their greatness. To this he acknowledged that one objection might possibly be made—“Why, then,” it might be asked, “apply to the public for pecuniary relief? Why want to borrow money?” But this, he affirmed, the Company did not ask: they only asked leave to increase their own capital—an indulgence to which he thought them fully entitled. In order to this he moved a resolution enabling the Company to continue their bonded debt at two millions, and to issue new bonds for one million more, which was agreed to without a division.

Motion for
 taxing places
 and pen-
 sions.

Nearly at the same time Mr. Harrison brought forward a motion respecting sinecure places and pensions, all of which above two hundred pounds per annum he proposed to tax, during the continuance of the war, in a certain specified and gradual scale of proportion. Mr. Burke treated this proposition with great disdain, and compared the measure to those which had oc-

casioned the ruin of France. As a measure of resource, he said, it was trifling and inadequate; as a measure of policy, mistaken. If the poor were only to be relieved in this way, then let them submit to the will of God.—Mr. Pitt affirmed that the motion held out false principles. Were the country, instead of a flourishing, in a desperate situation, the house he thought, would not recur to a measure like the present: but from a review of the state of the kingdom, he contended that the nation had great cause of exultation.—The votes in favor of the motion were 50, against it 119.

A bill, enabling Frenchmen to enlist in his majesty's service on the continent; or, in other words, for employing the French emigrants in a military capacity; occasioned at this period of the session much and sharp discussion. Mr. Burke affirmed, that this measure was the auspicious beginning of a new system; that the honors, rights, and all the property, of these emigrants must be restored to them, before ours could be secured to us.—On the third reading of the bill, April 18, Mr. Fox made an eloquent speech in opposition to it. He protested that it was far from his intention to say any thing harsh of the emigrants. On the contrary, he respected their sincerity, and he felt for their distress, though he disagreed with them in opinion. But if differ-

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1794. }ence of opinion were to be the cause of our withholding from each other sympathy and compassion, this would be a dismal world to inhabit. He verily believed that on the toleration of different opinions upon all points, civil and religious, depended all the peace, he had almost said, all the virtue, and, consequently, all the happiness, of this world. But, because he felt compassion for their situation, no man could thence conclude that he was willing to pledge the faith of this country to the restoration of all they enjoyed before the revolution; and, as a necessary concomitant of this pledge, to the total destruction of the present government of France: that would, in his opinion, expose this country to great and tremendous evils. He knew not what might be the objects of others in this war: he had two—one, that it should be as short as possible; another, that it should be as little bloody and savage as possible. Were this measure adopted, the war would be made, in all probability, longer and more bloody. Those emigrants, if taken in arms, will undoubtedly be regarded as rebels, and put to death. It was contrary to every principle of humanity thus to sacrifice them in a hopeless contest. The human mind had of late been made familiar with misery. The finest feelings of our nature were blunted by the repetition of scenes of horror. This he

extremely lamented; for he did not, with the ancient Stoicks, esteem humanity to be a weakness, but the strongest and the fairest friend to virtue.

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Mr. Burke rose and said, that the right honorable gentleman had pronounced an elegant panegyric on humanity in general, and at the same time had taken care to do justice to his own. On another occasion these flourishes of rhetoric might have been called *ambitiosa ornamenta*. As when the sour Lacedemonian, on hearing the praises of Hercules, asked, "Who blamed Hercules?" So now it might be asked, "Who blamed humanity?" All the horrors of France might be imputed to the *talk* of humanity for thirty years past. Retaliation was the law of nature; even LOCKE, whose book, in general, was one of the worst ever written, was right in this. It was said that the emigrants would be executed as traitors if taken, and this would provoke executions on the other side. God forbid that it should not; that the authors of murder should not find it recoil on their own heads. But this would inflame the Jacobins! What; inflame men whose theory was murder, and whose practice surpassed their theory? The combination against them, it was affirmed, had made these Jacobins cruel. There was a combination against Louis XIV.; but did he for

BOOK this murder his ministers and his generals?
XX. Never but in English writings and English
1794. speeches was this apology made for their ferocity.
They were expelled from the pale of humanity,
because they were wild beasts and murderers
upon principle. He denied that the French
were a people struggling for liberty. Under the
old government of France, which had some bad
things in it with much good, the palace and the
cottage were equally secure : every man enjoyed
himself in peace under his own vine and fig-tree.
He spake with the most marked and indecorous
contempt of the war being a war about the
Scheldt. It was a war for religion, for property,
for posterity, for all that was dear to man ; and
he rejoiced to see that instead of vain attempts
at obtaining a barrier, it was now to be pro-
secuted on its only rational principle, the destruc-
tion of the faction that occasioned it.

Mr. Sheridan, in an admirable reply, remark-
ed, that those frantic, furious, and murderous
dispositions, which the French had, during the
present revolution, discovered, were not shewn
by Louis XIV. and the French nation, at that
time, for this plain reason, because the confe-
deracy formed against them did not aim at their
final and utter destruction. The application of
the principle of humanity to the emigrants was
this—not to hold out to them a promise of pro-

tection which we may not afterwards be able to afford them. He called to the mind of the right honorable gentleman the protection promised to the people of La Vendée, but never granted. He desired him to recollect the protection likewise promised to the Toulonese, to the fulfilment of which we found ourselves unequal. He wished also to refresh the memory of the right honorable gentleman on the subject of holding out protection to the American loyalists—a practice against which that gentleman wrote and spoke with infinite ability; and predicted what would be the consequence of such offered protection—which predictions were subsequently verified.

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The question, being at length put, passed in the affirmative, after a most able debate, remarkable for being the last in which Mr. Burke, who soon afterwards vacated his seat in Parliament, took any active part, and in which he discovered no diminution of those extraordinary powers which had so long excited the admiration of the world, and which, unfortunately for mankind, had, for the last seven years of his life, taken so eccentric a direction.

At the end of the month of April, Mr. Secretary Dundas delivered a message from the king, announcing a treaty of subsidy with the king of Prussia, and a convention with the States General. Mr. Pitt stated the terms to be as

Treaty of
subsidy with
Prussia.

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1794. follows :—That his Prussian majesty had agreed to furnish 62,000 troops, for which his Britannic majesty had agreed to pay him 50,000*l.* per month; 100,000*l.* per month for forage, 400,000*l.* to put the army in motion, and 100,000*l.* on their return; of the aggregate of which sums the States General were to pay 400,000*l.* as their proportion. Over the troops subsidized at this enormous expense, the direction and command were still vested in the king of Prussia. The motion of Mr. Pitt for the sum of 2,500,000*l.* to be raised by way of loan on exchequer bills, in addition to the supplies of the current year, for the purpose of making good this engagement, after being vehemently combated in every stage, ultimately passed by a great majority.

A similar motion by lord Grenville in the house of lords met with a similar resistance. To an important question put by the marquis of Lansdown, “what security would be required from the king of Prussia for the performance of those services which were deemed equivalent to such enormous sums?” the earl of Mansfield, late lord Stormont, answered, “that his Prussian majesty would, no doubt, hold himself bound to the sacred maintenance of the faith he had pledged, from the dignified sentiments of his own royal mind.”—Lord Hawkesbury insisted strongly upon the necessity of persevering in the war, as neither of the great

objects of it, indemnity and security, was yet attained. His lordship expressed the most perfect confidence that the system now acted upon in France would be very short-lived. Considering the rapid waste of capital in that country, it must soon come to an end: *when*, he could not precisely predict; but it would be a sudden explosion, and break up at once. And lord Auckland hesitated not to say, that he had always thought this a war which was to be waged *usque ad internecionem*. The motion at length passed by the accustomed majority.

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On the 12th of May, Mr. Dundas brought down a second message from the king, importing, that seditious practices had been carried on by certain societies in London, in correspondence with other societies; that they had lately been pursued with increasing activity and boldness, and been avowedly directed to the assembling of a pretended national convention of the people, in contempt and defiance of the authority of parliament, on principles subversive of the existing laws and the constitution, and tending to introduce that system of anarchy prevailing in France: that his majesty had given orders for seizing the books and papers of those societies, which were to be laid before the house; that it was recommended to the house to consider them, and to pursue such measures as were

Message
from the
king re-
specting se-
ditionary soci-
eties.

BOOK necessary in order to prevent their pernicious
XX. tendency.

1794. On the same day, Thomas Hardy, *shoemaker* in Piccadilly, who had acted as secretary to the London Corresponding Society, and Daniel Adams, secretary to the Society for Constitutional Information, two well-known and long-established political associations, were apprehended, by warrant from the secretary of state, for treasonable practices; and several other members of the two societies were, in the course of a week, arrested, and, to the great astonishment of the public, committed close prisoners to the Tower, on a charge of high-treason.

The papers in question being referred to a secret committee of twenty-one members, chosen by ballot, the first report of the committee was brought up by Mr. Pitt on the 16th of May. It contained an account of the proceedings of the societies, from the year 1791, chiefly from the public newspapers. In a very long and studied harangue, Mr. Pitt endeavoured to impress upon the house the belief of the existence of a most dreadful and dangerous conspiracy. He should call, he said, the attention of the house to a society which, though composed of the meanest and most despicable of the people, acting upon the worst Jacobinical principles, had within it the means of the most unbounded extension and

rapid increase. It had already risen to thirty divisions in London, some containing six hundred persons, and was connected by a systematical chain of correspondence with other societies; scattered through all the manufacturing towns. That society had arrived at such enormous boldness as to declare themselves authorized to scan the proceedings of parliament, and prescribe limits for its actions, beyond which if it presumed to advance, an end was to be put to its existence. Such language from people so contemptible might seem the effect of insanity, and deserving only of compassion; but it had been the result of deep design, moulded into shape, and fit for mischievous effects when opportunity should occur. About six weeks ago the Corresponding Society had, in due form, laid before the Constitutional Society a deliberate and deep-concerted plan for assembling a convention for all England, intended evidently to exercise legislative and judicial capacities, to overturn the established system of government, and wrest from the parliament the power lodged in their hands; and in their circular letter they had emphatically stated that no time was to be lost. Arms had been actually procured and distributed by these societies; and, in reference to the nature and magnitude of the objects they had in view, it would appear that a conspiracy so

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Habeas Cor-
pus act sus-
pended.

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1794. formidable had never yet existed. Mr. Pitt concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill empowering his majesty to secure and detain all persons suspected of designs against his crown and government.

Mr. Fox, in reply, declared "that he had listened in vain to the report now read for a discovery of facts more important than those which had been previously detailed in every newspaper. These societies, however intemperate in some of their expressions and proceedings, uniformly professed their objects to be the redress of grievances, by means of a reform in parliament. A convention of the same nature with that now proposed was actually held at Westminster in the year 1780, of which Mr. Pitt might possibly have been, and of which he himself certainly was, a member. This convention held a public correspondence with societies in Yorkshire and other places; they presented the result of their labors to the house, which refused indeed to acknowledge them as delegates, but allowed their right to petition as individuals, and received their petition. By a convention the Irish Catholics had obtained their privileges. How could the house after these examples, upon what pretence, or with what equity, declare a convention assembling with this object merely in view to be illegal? Such a convention as that stated by the minister would in-

deed be highly criminal; but the idea was utterly incredible and ridiculous. Were an hundred of these persons insane enough to issue orders, and assume the powers of government, where would they find another hundred disposed to obey them? Let the house consider the extent of authority given to the crown by the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act. Every man who discoursed freely upon the subject of the war, which he from his heart regarded as detestable, would be in the hands and at the mercy of the ministers. Former suspensions of this act in the case of actual or threatened invasion, at a time when the people were divided in opinion as to the right of the house of Hanover, formed no precedent for the present measure. Who are now the objects of this exercise of despotism?—a number of individuals, without money, without means, possessing neither military nor civil authority. The sacrifice required was mighty, the danger was altogether imaginary; or if any danger, any criminality, existed, the old established laws known to the constitution were fully adequate to the occasion.” Mr. Fox repeated “that the pretexts for this violent and dangerous measure were the most flimsy and bare-faced, and the measure itself the most daring and impudent, he had ever witnessed.”

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The motion for leave to bring in the bill was

BOOK XX. carried by a great majority, but in every stage
1794. it met with a most resolute and vigorous opposition. Mr. Jekyl observed, "that some persons were indeed in custody upon a charge of high-treason, but was it to be supposed, if guilty, that they would escape if the present bill were not passed into a law? Why excite a needless and universal alarm for the sake of punishing a few?"

Mr. Sheridan declared his belief not only that no treasonable practices existed, but that ministers knew this to be the fact, although it might be necessary, for their views, to create some new cause of panic and consternation. Of all other conspiracies, he said, secresy was a leading feature; and if this was a conspiracy, it was the most garrulous conspiracy he had ever heard of.

Mr. Grey allowed "that in extreme cases extreme powers should certainly be given; but no such case was ever made out in the present instance, for the charge at most amounted only to sedition. In the year 1782 Mr. Pitt himself had been of opinion that parliamentary reform was only to be accomplished by resolutions of the people acting on the *prudence* of the house. This same William Pitt, who had once taught the public to believe that nothing honest was to be expected from the house of commons, now asserted that the people should do nothing for themselves. William Pitt, the reformer of that

day, was William Pitt the prosecutor, and persecutor too, of reformers now. But, for his own part, he declared, that however impugned, parliamentary reform was a cause he would never desert, nor would he, to preserve power or gratify ambition, ever become AN UNPRINCIPLED APOSTATE."—The bill, which was introduced on the 16th, passed on the 17th of May by a majority of five to one; after occasioning in its progress through the house no less than nineteen divisions.

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Very warm debates also upon this subject took place in the house of lords, in the course of which lord Thurlow gave it as his opinion, that the facts stated in the report did not amount to the crime of high-treason, though to that of sedition they undoubtedly might, and did. But sedition is by the law of England an offence of a total different nature from treason; obscurely defined, and of a comparatively trivial import.

After passing the Suspension Bill an address was sent down from the lords to the commons, expressing, in strong terms, their belief in, and abhorrence of, the conspiracy, as stated in the report, and their loyal wishes to bring to exemplary punishment the authors and abettors of such plans, &c. This declaration of the legislature, pending a judicial prosecution, and founded upon *ex parte* evidence, was represented

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as grossly unjust and unconstitutional, for it must have an obvious and powerful tendency to bias the minds of the juries who were to decide upon the fate of the persons accused, and who, agreeably to the principles of the law of England, ought to be presumed innocent till they were found and pronounced guilty after a fair and open trial. The house nevertheless agreed to the address, and negatived an amendment proposed by Mr. Fox, omitting the clause which stated their belief of the conspiracy, without a division.

Motion by
Mr. Sheridan for the
partial abolition of the
test laws.

In consequence of the provision made in the course of the session for embodying a very numerous corps of French emigrants, Mr. Sheridan conceived it proper to move for leave to bring in a bill for a new military test, containing merely a declaration of allegiance, such as might admit the whole body of English Dissenters, Catholic and Protestant, to serve their country in a military capacity; to which he said that he presumed the house would allow them to be at least as competent as an army of French Papists. Mr. Sheridan very forcibly objected to all tests and disqualifying laws; but, confining himself on the present occasion to what he thought might probably be granted, he extended his motion only to military and naval tests, leaving all civil employments to remain as they were.

But it was in vain to expect any liberal con-
 cession from the present administration; and
 the previous question being moved by Mr.
 Dundas, upon this unwelcome and perplexing
 motion, it was carried with little debate, and
 without any division.

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On the 30th May, the duke of Bedford, who
 had already distinguished himself as an able
 speaker in the house of peers, called for the
 attention of their lordships on the important
 subject of peace. His grace stated it to be his
 design to shew the views which had originally
 been entertained of the war by the government
 and the legislature, the different aspects it had
 subsequently assumed, and the impossibility of
 drawing any specific conclusion respecting the
 intention of administration, or limiting the ca-
 lamity to any object, the attainment of which
 would satisfy their wishes. For this purpose his
 grace offered a series of propositions, no less
 than fourteen in number, for the consideration,
 and, if approved by their lordships, for the assent
 of that house.

Series of
 resolutions
 moved by
 the duke of
 Bedford and
 Mr. Fox.

The First resolution imported in substance,
 that, previous to the commencement of hosti-
 lities, it was the professed policy of his majesty's
 government to preserve a strict neutrality in re-
 lation to France, and that, after the declaration
 of war, the avowed object of it was to oppose

BOOK all views of ambition and aggrandizement on
 XX. the part of that country.

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2. That before the end of April 1793, the armies of France were obliged to evacuate Holland and Flanders, and that the prince of Cobourg did, by a proclamation, engage to co-operate with general Dumouriez, to give to France the constitution of monarchy she had formed for herself; and that, within the compass of a few days, this declaration was superseded and revoked.

3. That by the 15th article of the treaty concluded with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel on the 10th of April, it appears that his majesty's ministers were of opinion that the situation of affairs had then entirely changed its aspect, in consequence of which his majesty might not have occasion for the Hessian troops.

4. That on the 14th of July, 1793, a convention was concluded by Great Britain with Prussia, in which the two powers reciprocally promise to continue to employ their respective forces, as far as their circumstances would permit, in carrying on a war equally just and necessary.

5. That on the 23d of August, 1793, the inhabitants of Toulon did declare that it was their unanimous wish to adopt a monarchical government upon the basis of the constitution

of 1789; and that lord Hood, by his proclamation of the 28th of August, on taking possession of Toulon, did accept of that declaration.

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6. That the constitution to which the preceding declaration and acceptance are applied was the same which his majesty's ambassador at the Hague did, in a memorial presented to the States-General on the 15th of January 1793, describe in the following terms, viz. "It is not quite four years since certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, have presumed to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize this dream, the offspring of their vanity, it became necessary for them to overturn and destroy all established notions of subordination, of morals, and of religion."—And that this description was applied by the said ambassador to a government with which his majesty continued to treat and negotiate, from its institution in 1789 to its dissolution in 1792; and that his majesty's ambassador was not recalled from Paris until that government was dissolved.

7. That by the declaration of the 25th of October, 1793, his majesty demands only of France that some legitimate and stable government should be established, and that his majesty hoped to find in the other powers engaged with

BOOK him in the common cause, sentiments and views
XX. perfectly conformable to his own.

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8. That at the commencement of the war the prosecution of it was considered by his majesty as a cause of general concern, in which his majesty had every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of the powers united with him by the ties of alliance or interest.

9. That it does not appear, in this cause of general concern, that his majesty has received that cordial co-operation.

10. That, on the contrary, it does appear that many of those powers have not co-operated with his majesty ; that Russia has not contributed in any shape to the support of this common cause ; that the crowns of Sweden and Denmark have united to defend themselves against any attempts to force them to take part in this cause ; that the republics of Venice and Switzerland remain neuter ; and that Sardinia is subsidized by Great Britain merely to enable him to act upon the defensive.

11. That the king of Prussia, bound by the convention of July, 1793, to act as a principal in the war, in the most perfect concert and the most intimate confidence with his majesty, has, by the treaty of April 1794, obtained the grant of an enormous subsidy from this country in

order to secure his farther co-operation ; and that Great Britain is, in fact, loaded with his proper share of the burden of a war which is said to be the common cause of every civilized state.

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12. That the object of the war, as originally professed on our part, viz. the restoration of peace on terms of permanent security, is now attainable—his majesty uniformly abstaining from any interference with respect to the internal affairs of France.

13. That it is the duty of his majesty's ministers to avail themselves of the present circumstances of the war, by proposing to France equitable and moderate conditions of reconciliation.

14. That in every possible case it is equally desirable that his majesty should make an *explicit* declaration of his views ; and if interference is intended, to make the degree of that interference precisely known, in order to induce such parts of the French nation as are dissatisfied with their present government to exert themselves with security.

His grace expatiated upon these propositions much at large, and with great pertinence and propriety ; and he spoke in terms of generous approbation of the amelioration produced in France at the period of the revolution, the primordial seeds of which were imported from America. Speculative men, he said, had after-

BOOK XX. wards attempted to form a system too pure for
the present state of society; but time would
1794. have softened down these theories, and have
made it one of the grandest and most extraordinary
structures that was ever formed by man. During this time, excepting some trifling disputes
with the Germanic princes about feudal superiorities in Alsace, nothing happened to excite the
jealousy of other powers. Yet two of the despotic potentates of the Continent affected to see
the progress of the revolution with alarm, and by means of the Convention of Pilnitz laid the
foundation of all the horrors which have followed. The conduct of our allies, with other concurrent
causes, had conspired to produce a second revolution. And subsequent to the king's death he
allowed that every species of horror had passed on the devoted scene of France. But had not
the allied powers urged them on to all these savage acts? Have they not been pressed on
from murder to murder, goaded, set upon like
beasts of prey, and rendered desperate in the
toil? With respect to the question, how a
permanent peace was to be made with France,
his grace professed himself at a loss to comprehend the force of the epithet. As applied to
treaties between nations, no peace had ever been,
or could ever be, permanent which it suited the
interest and inclination of either party to break,

and a peace concluded at the present time was as likely to be permanent as at any other. He then proceeded to move his first resolution.

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Lord Fitzwilliam, in a speech of great violence, opposed the position that peace could with safety be made with France. His lordship maintained, that we had a right to interfere in the internal concerns of France till they should be so regulated as to give security to mankind, and that the part Great Britain had acted became a great and magnanimous people.

The duke of Grafton supported the motion brought forward by the duke of Bedford, and observed, that four years ago the government was acting the Drawcansir in defence of the balance of power in Europe, and was now seen prize-fighting for the re-establishment of despotism in France. His grace adverted to the request made by the French to the king of England to mediate between them and Austria—an opportunity never to be recalled: and which, if embraced with cordiality and good faith, would have placed Europe at this day in a happy state of peace.

Lord Hawkesbury opposed the motion upon the ground of its being an improper interference with the ROYAL PREROGATIVE. There were, he said, no hopes of a permanent peace with the French; the speediest method of obtaining it

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would be by a change in that government. We were justified in our endeavours to effect this object in every practicable way ; and their making war upon us unprovoked, undoubtedly gave us new rights ; and this none who understood the law of nations could possibly call in question.

Lord Grenville closed the debate with the false and daring assertion, that in no former war had ministers been called upon to state the specific object of it ; adding, that he did not see why we were not to interfere with the internal concerns of France, and that the only security we could obtain for a permanent peace was in restoring monarchy to France.—The resolution moved, which could not be fairly met, was evaded by the question of adjournment.

On the same day Mr. Fox introduced into the house of commons a series of resolutions precisely similar to those moved by the duke of Bedford in the house of lords, which he illustrated and defended with his wonted ability.—What he would particularly insist upon, Mr. Fox said, was, that we had entered into the war on defensive principles, and were called upon to continue it upon other principles ; and that the people were deluded by false pretences to spend their blood and money for purposes which, if fairly stated to them in the first instance, they would not have consented to. He remarked that in all the con-

ventions with foreign powers Great Britain had pledged herself not to lay down her arms, till the conquests made by France on each were restored. But no reciprocal guarantee had been required from them in our favor. Thus we alone were bound to continue a war *ad internecionem*, and consequently of incalculable duration.---Under such views, Mr. Fox said, he conceived it his duty to propose some rational means of procuring peace. Experience proved that governments of every description might exist at the same time, not only without mutual injury, but in mutual friendship. Let us then make a trial with France. The advantages we had gained might indeed be of eminent use in negotiating a peace, but could not in the least conduce to the success of that system by which France was to be destroyed. If the present proposition was rejected, let the determination of ministers to subvert the existing French government be openly and solemnly avowed. If we declared for the restoration of the old monarchy, we might then be joined by its partizans. If for the Constitution of 1791, then by the approvers of that Constitution. Mr. Fox adverted, in conclusion, to the vast power of the French nation, and to the incredible force she was capable of exerting: and from a survey of the state of the campaign on the frontier of that country, and of the myriads

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of men in arms, he inferred the conquest of France to be more desperate than ever. As to any disgrace that might be supposed to attach to a negotiation with the present rulers of France, the minister could not have forgotten that he himself had treated with M. Chauvelin, the minister of the Jacobin Republic, and lord Aukland with general Dumouriez, when at the head of their armies.

Mr. Pitt alleged in reply, that it was not the design of ministers to conquer, but to save France, and to restore to it liberty and order, instead of anarchy and despair.—Should we attempt to negotiate, there was no probability that the French government would agree to any terms consistent with the dignity of this country. As to the French West India islands forming a proper basis for negotiation, he would rather wish them for ever lost to this nation, than that Jacobin principles should remain unsubdued. Upon that every thing dear to us depended. But by declaring in favor of any particular form of government to be eventually established, on the downfall of the present system, we should weaken the general confederacy which now subsisted in opposition to it; and no scheme of government that might be substituted could be so pernicious to the interests of Europe as that severe and sanguinary despotism which actually prevailed at this moment in France.

The previous question being at length moved on the first resolution, it was carried by 210 to 57 voices.

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On the day preceding the termination of the session, Mr. Sheridan moved for an account of the monies issued for the use of the king of Prussia—and for some specific information respecting the troops to be employed by him, conformably to his engagements with this country. In a very able speech, Mr. Sheridan called upon ministers: to declare, wherefore, when all they had asked from parliament had been granted, the hopes and expectations excited by them had ended in disgrace and disaster. This certainly demanded enquiry. What services had been rendered to Great Britain by the army of Prussians maintained at her expense? Was the march to Paris delayed because the king of Prussia was employed in massacring the Poles? And would this be accepted as an excuse for not fulfilling the conditions of the late alliance? The object of the war as avowed by ministers was manifestly unattainable; he wished to know if they were still resolved to persevere in it; and whether the bloody flag was to be hoisted, in order to declare to the world, that war was to be carried on till either the government of France was exterminated, or England fell in the attempt. Ministers seemed to expect that the

Motion by
Mr. Sheri-
dan relative
to the treaty
with Prussia.

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house would give them credit for ability in future in proportion as they had manifested incapacity during the past. They required support in return for delusion, and confidence as the reward of disappointment.—On this occasion Mr. Pitt again avowed in the most explicit terms, that the object of the war was undoubtedly the destruction of the Jacobin government of France; which he regarded not as a war of extermination or conquest, but merely for the emancipation of that unhappy country: and the disappointments experienced by the allies, were they ten times greater than they appeared to be in the exaggerated statements the house had just heard, made not an atom of difference as to the plan which prudence pointed out for the safety and preservation of the realm. He absolutely refused to give the least satisfaction as to the object of the motion; and threw out some injurious insinuations as to the motives of those persons who could wish such questions to be answered in the midst of a campaign. As ministers were responsible to parliament for the conduct of the war, any premature interference on their part would be highly improper.—Mr. Grey appealed to the house whether two disastrous campaigns were not sufficient to demonstrate the folly of attempting to destroy the existing government of France? If we were

unable to make the least impression, even during a rebellion in the country, what was to be expected from any future efforts? The interference of parliament was, he said, essential to the salvation of the kingdom. As to the motion before the house, it went merely to ascertain a matter of fact, whether the money had been paid, and whether the troops stipulated for were employed? This was said to be a secret; and it was indeed a secret why the treaty had been entered into at all; a secret why the money had been granted; and a secret where the troops were to be found. Mr. Sheridan, seeing no prospect of success, at length indignantly withdrew his motion.

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On the 11th of July, 1794, the session was terminated by a speech from the throne, in which his majesty was pleased to urge his two houses of parliament to persevere with increased vigor and exertion in the present arduous contest against a power irreconcilably hostile in its principles and spirit to all regular and established government.

Immediately on the rising of parliament various alterations in the administration took place. Changes in administration.

Earl Fitzwilliam was declared president of the council, in the room of the justly lamented earl Camden; earl Spencer appointed lord privy-seal; the duke of Portland made third secretary of state; and Mr. Windham, secretary at war. Before

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XX. moted to the vice-royalty of Ireland; and the
1794. earl of Mansfield, late lord Stormont, and nephew to the famous chief-justice Mansfield, lately deceased, succeeded to the presidency of the council. Lord Spencer was, by a happy choice, placed at the head of the Admiralty; and lord Chatham, brother to the premier, who had for some years occupied that important department, by a change very beneficial to the public, was now made lord privy-seal.

When the chiefs of the alarmists went over to the court, it was understood that, upon the first favorable opportunity, provision should be made for them and their partizans, which was now done in an ample manner. But no amelioration of the general system was discernible in consequence of this new coalition; and the character of the duke of Portland, at least, did not appear in a light more dignified or disinterested to the public at large by his acceptance of an office which he himself had, fourteen years before, strenuously labored to abolish, as superfluous in itself, and affording the means of corrupt influence, and that under a minister whose original appointment his grace had reprobated as an insult on parliament and the nation. Ten new peers were also created, and the duke of Portland's services still farther rewarded with a

blue ribband, and the office of chancellor of the university of Oxford *.

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As the campaign of 1793 terminated very late in the year, that of 1794 did not commence early. On the 6th of January the duke of Brunswick addressed a remarkable letter to the king of Prussia, in which he announced the resignation of his command, stating as his motive "the unhappy experience that want of connection, distrust, egotism, and a spirit of cabal, had disconcerted the measures adopted during the two last campaigns." He speaks still more plainly in a subsequent part of the letter, saying—"When, instead of the prevalence of an unanimous sentiment and the same principle, each army acts separate and alone, of its own accord, without any fixed plan, without unanimity and without principles, the consequences are such as we have seen at Dunkirk, at Maubeuge, and Landau. Heaven preserve your majesty from great misfortunes !"

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Letter from
the duke of
Brunswick to
the king of
Prussia.

* The accumulation of honors and rewards conferred upon this nobleman, in consequence of the abandonment of his principles and his party, produced the following sarcastic epigram, in allusion to his grace's family motto, CRAIGNEZ HONTE :—

When the first Bentinck warn'd his race

Above all things to fear disgrace,

Did his prophetic soul foresee,

PORTLAND, thy base apostasy ?

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1794.

Intrigues of
the court of
Berlin.

It is probable that the king of Prussia, being totally disappointed in his selfish and unprincipled views of sharing in the spoils of vanquished France, had already determined to withdraw himself from the confederacy. In the month of February certain commissioners from the French republic arrived at Frankfort, under the pretext of negotiating for an exchange of prisoners: but the marked distinction with which they were treated, with the long and secret conferences which they held with general Kalkreuth, who was known to possess the entire confidence of the Prussian monarch, indicated a treaty of very different import and far higher moment. Field-marshal Mullendorf succeeded to the duke of Brunswic in the command of the Prussian army; and an intimation to the prince of Cobourg that he had received orders from his court to march towards Cologne was followed, on the 13th of March, by a proclamation addressed to the German empire, announcing his Prussian majesty's actual secession from the grand confederacy. His majesty stated "the incredible efforts he had made to oppose this *almost* unconquerable enemy; that he had made every possible sacrifice to the common cause which the natural strength of Prussia would permit; and that he is able no longer to take an active part, *from his own means*, without ruining his

own dominions, and entirely exhausting the property of his subjects. He concludes, therefore, with declaring his resolution to withdraw his troops from the protection of the empire, and to order them instantly to return to his own dominions."

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The British minister, whom it was well known that his Prussian majesty regarded as no statesman, at once fell into the snare, and that famous treaty of subsidy was concluded, conformably to which the sum of near two millions sterling was to be paid to the court of Berlin for the service of an army of 62,000 men, to be commanded by an officer of his Prussian majesty's own appointment. Every article in this treaty betrayed the folly and incapacity of the British ministry; and the circumstance alone of a Prussian general being placed at the head of the troops was sufficient to render the agreement totally ineffectual. The wealth of Britain was exhausted to purchase the aid of, at best, a nominal, perhaps a treacherous, ally—one already known to be devoid equally of honor and of honesty.

A general council of war was convened in the month of March at Ath, when the projected arrangements of the campaign, on the part of the court of Vienna, were brought forward by general Haddick. A main article of this plan was, that general Clairfait, an Austrian officer of great

Military
transactions.

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ability and experience, should be appointed to the command of the auxiliary forces, and that the duke of York should act under his orders—the prince of Cobourg continuing at the head of the grand Imperial army. This his royal highness refused with disdain; and, after much time lost in consulting the two courts, a compromise was at length effected, and it was determined that the emperor himself should take the field in person, and that in him should be vested the supreme command*. On the 9th of April his Imperial majesty arrived at Brussels, where he was solemnly inaugurated duke of Brabant. Thence he proceeded to Valenciennes, where his presence diffused at least the appearance of joy; and, on the 16th, the whole army was reviewed by him on the heights above Cateau. On the following day they marched in eight columns to invest Landreci. The French assembled in force at the camp of Cæsar, near Cambray, from which they were, on the 23d,

* Possibly the duke of York had never heard that Peter the Great served as a private soldier in his own army; or possibly his ideas of greatness might be different. It does not indeed appear that his royal highness was subject to the *orders* even of the Emperor. His language in his dispatch of April 30th, is, “the emperor has *desired* me to march this evening to St. Amand:” and, May 2, “In consequence of the emperor’s *request* I marched from the camp near Cateau, &c.”

driven by the Confederates, and the investment of Landreci immediately took place. The very next day a general assault took place upon the different posts of the allies in this quarter on the part of the French, now under the command of general Pichegru, in consequence of a pre-concerted plan, which embraced the whole line of frontier from Treves to the sea. They were for the most part repulsed; but the post of Moucron, where general Clairfait commanded, was attacked with far superior force by Pichegru in person, and carried, after a brave resistance. In consequence of this success Courtray and Menin fell into the hands of the republicans. In return, the fortress of Landreci, which had repelled the utmost efforts of prince Eugene in 1712, fell into the hands of the prince of Cobourg, after a siege of no long duration.

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Landreci
captured by
the allies.

A variety of severe but indecisive conflicts took place in the course of the next two months, interesting only to readers of military history. About the middle of June, the French under general Jourdain, who commanded on the side of the Moselle, passed the Sambre, for the third time in the space of fourteen days, and after being twice repulsed laid siege to the town of Charleroi. The danger to which this important place, and eventually Brussels itself, was exposed, determined the prince of Cobourg to

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Battle of
Fleurus.

make one grand effort for its relief. On the 21st he reached Ath, and on the 24th effected a junction with the hereditary prince of Orange and general Beaulieu, who commanded in that quarter. The main body of the French army, under general Jourdain, was strongly posted at this time in the vicinity of Fleurus, a place already famous in the annals of war, to cover the siege of Charleroi; on whom, upon the morning of the 26th, the prince of Cobourg hazarded a general attack. The battle continued with unabating fury till near the close of the day, by which time the allied army was defeated in every part, and forced with immense loss to retreat to Halle, thirty miles from the scene of action. This was a great and decisive victory. But Charleroi, with a view to save which this bloody action was fought, had, as subsequently appeared, surrendered on the evening of the 25th, and Brussels fell, without further resistance, into the hands of the enemy.

Continued
successes of
the French.

General Clairfait was equally unfortunate on the opposite side. Ypres, the key of Western Flanders, was besieged by 50,000 men, commanded by general Moreau. After a series of engagements, in which the French were almost uniformly victorious, the Austrians were compelled to fall back upon Ghent, and Ypres surrendered on the 17th of June. The emperor,

with his military favorite, general Mack, now in utter despair of success, left the army, after having in vain issued proclamation after proclamation, calling upon the inhabitants of the Low Countries to rise in a mass in order to repel the invaders.

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During this time the duke of York enjoyed the honor of a separate command at Tournay, a position which recent events made wholly untenable: it was therefore evacuated, the duke with his army retreating in the direction of Antwerp. What service was rendered to the common cause by the British troops while stationed at Tournay does not clearly appear; at Fleurus they might perhaps have changed the fortune of the day: and it is observable that the duke represents in his own dispatch of the 24th of June, as very hazardous his position before Tournay subsequent to the departure of the prince of Cobourg.

No sooner was the fate of the Netherlands thus decided, than lord Moira arrived from England with a reinforcement of 10,000 men at Ostend, the gallant remains of that army, wasted by long confinement on board the transports; by sickness, and chagrin, which had been destined to re-establish royalty in Brittany. This able officer found his situation very critical, the French being in possession of the country on all sides of

Lord Moira
arrives at
Ostend.

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him. It was deemed necessary immediately to evacuate the town, and endeavour to force his way, without tents or baggage, through the enemy, to join the army of the allies, which, by great and skilful exertion, he accomplished on the 8th of July: the shipping in the harbour, amounting to 150 sail, with the ammunition, stores, &c. on board, took their departure for Flushing. Thus Ostend; and nearly at the same time Tournay and Ghent, fell into the hands of the French.

Dangerous
situation of
Holland.

In the different and partial engagements which had taken place between general Pichegru and the prince of Cobourg since the fatal battle of Fleurus, the former had greatly the advantage. Mons, Oudenarde, and Nieuport, places widely distant, and, soon after, Mechlin, surrendered to the republican arms. Antwerp itself was no longer considered as a safe retreat. In this exigency the stadtholder solicited the States-General to make an extraordinary levy throughout the provinces, but without effect. Disaffection, distrust, or at best apathy, every where prevailed, and a speedy revolution in the government was to be apprehended.

About the middle of July general Kleber took possession of Louvain, after defeating general Clairfait, who had possession of the famous camp of the Montagne-de-Fer. The last hope of

the allies, that of forming a line of defence from Antwerp to Namur, was relinquished—Namur being, on the night of the 16th, abandoned by general Beaulieu; and on the 24th the French took quiet possession of Antwerp, the allies having previously set fire to the immense magazines deposited there. Great quantities of stores and ammunition nevertheless, in different parts, fell into the hands of the enemy. Sluys made a brave resistance, but surrendered after a siege of six weeks, the garrison, by a novelty in this strange campaign, marching out with the honors of war. The strong towns still occupied by the allies on the French territory, Landreci, Quesnoy, Condé, and Valenciennes, being now completely insulated, successively reverted, almost without resistance, to their former possessors.

A report presented at this period by the committee of Public Safety to the Convention thus emphatically concludes: "Thus fade away for ever all the chimerical hopes of all our enemies; and thus have the ephemeral successes of Europe produced only shame to her, and glory to us. What! cannot all Europe conquer France? that country which has been said to be only a chasm in the map of Europe? Wait, legislators—the combined powers have only deferred their formidable designs, and next year they are determined to march to Paris."

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The army under the duke of York was, at the beginning of August, stationed at Breda, whence, for greater security, they quickly retreated towards Bois-le-Duc. But the French forces now re-collected under general Pichegru advancing rapidly upon them, to the number of 80,000 men, about the middle of September, the duke crossed the Maese, and took a fresh position near Grave, and at the beginning of October he encamped under the walls of Nimeguen. Towards the end of the month his royal highness passed the Waal, leaving general Walmoden with a corps to cover the town of Nimeguen, which was evacuated in great confusion, and with much loss, on the 7th of November. Bois-le-Duc, Breda, and, after a resistance worthy of the best days of the republic, Grave, were successively reduced. Scarcely could the allies now stand any where even upon the defensive, much less form any rational or feasible plan for recovering their stupendous losses.

During the operations of general Pichegru in Dutch Flanders, the Austrian general La Tour was totally defeated by general Jourdain near Liege, which city, and those of Aix-la-Chapelle and Juliers, were occupied by the French. That able commander the prince of Cobourg, was at this period, in consequence, as believed, of the pressing instances of the court of London, whose

projects military and civil he held in avowed contempt, dismissed suddenly from his high and painful pre-eminence : and his successor, general Clairfait, after the most gallant efforts, was compelled early in October to repass the Rhine at Cologne. The French pursued the Imperial troops to the very margin of the river ; and as the rear of the Austrian army embarked, the question was loudly and insultingly asked, if that was the road to Paris ?

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About the end of September the siege of Maestricht was formally commenced, and lasted to the beginning of November, during which interval the attack and defence were conducted with heroic bravery. The atmosphere seemed filled with balls, bombs, and shells, and scarcely was a place of safety left in the whole circuit of the city. Two thousand buildings, public and private, were said to be destroyed, and a general storm was intended on the 4th of November, when the governor, moved by the situation of the inhabitants, and the entreaties of the magistrates, consented to articles of capitulation with general Kleber, who entered the place on the same day.

After this conquest the French armies enjoyed some weeks of comparative repose ; but general Pichegru had still greater designs in contemplation, and only waited for the advantage of

General Pichegru passes the Maese and Waal,

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the frost which set in with unusual rigor about the middle of December. In the course of a week the Maese and the Waal were frozen over, and on the 27th a strong column of French crossed the former of those rivers, while another corps made themselves masters of the Bommel. But the French general did not make his grand movement till the 10th of January, 1795, when the main body of his forces crossed the Waal at different points, and made a general attack upon the lines of the allies, extending between Nimeguen and Arnheim, under the command of general Walmoden,—the duke of York having before this time prudently returned to England.

Disastrous
retreat of
the English
army.

The allies were defeated in every quarter. A precipitate retreat was ordered towards Amersfort and Deventer. In this retreat, which differed little from a flight, the wretched fugitives were exposed to every species of distress which it is possible for human-nature to suffer. From the want of common necessities in the allied army, a dreadful sickness and mortality prevailed, and the harassed and dispirited troops, exposed to the intense severity of the weather, the drifting snow, and heavy falls of sleet and rain, almost without clothing, frequently without sustenance, without medicines, without tents, littered down in cold and damp churches and other public buildings, expired daily and nightly by hun-

dreds, the compassionate victims of a fatal and unparalleled delusion*.

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This last retreat was equivalent to a formal surrender of Holland into the hands of the French. In vain had the stadtholder endeavoured by manifestoes and proclamations to induce the Dutch nation to rise in a mass for the defence of their country. He who had long been the object of their hatred now became no less so of their contempt. Utrecht, Rotterdam, and

* General Harcourt, in his dispatch of January 21, from Deventer, expresses to the commander in chief his *satisfaction* at having burnt all the vessels containing forage and stores upon the Leck, and effecting the destruction of *most* of the ammunition contained in fifteen ordnance vessels at Rotterdam.—It is, however, certain, that immense quantities of ammunition and stores fell into the hands of the French. A private letter from an officer, dated from Osnaburg, February 13, says, “The sufferings and loss of the army have been dreadful : In one of our marches during the night over a large frozen morass, where an accident obliged me to remain behind the army for near an hour, my only direction when the dawn came, to point the route the army had taken, was the miserable victims that were lying every where dead or dying of cold, famine, and fatigue, in the road the army had marched. The frost was most intense ; and the groans and lamentations of the wretched groups I passed still ring in my ears. Never shall I forget the horrors of that night. Our loss in stores is beyond all credibility. The quantity of every description destroyed at Helvoetsluys, Rotterdam, Doesburg, and Deventer, exceeds all calculation. No defeat could have more disastrous consequences than this unfortunate retreat has been attended with.”

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Amsterdam
surrenders
to the con-
queror.

Dort, surrendered to the French without resistance; and the stadtholder with his family, not without difficulty, and attended by all the marks of popular resentment during his short abode at the Hague, made his escape in an open boat from Scheveling on the 19th of January. On the succeeding day general Pichegru, who had conducted himself with uniform mildness and moderation, made his public entry into Amsterdam; and, by order of the States-General, every other fortress in the republic opened its gates to the French. On the 27th of January the provisional representatives of the people of Holland assembled, and a decree immediately passed for the total abolition of the stadtholderate, and for the establishment, under the protection of the republic of France, of a new provisional government for the United Provinces.—Such was the termination of this ever-memorable campaign, conceived on the part of the British ministry in the spirit of madness, and conducted in that of the most complete imbecility.

The events of the war in which the Austrians and the auxiliary army of Prussians on the side of the Moselle were engaged, during these transactions in the Low Countries, are of little comparative moment.

At the conclusion of May, the Prussian general, Mullendorf, who was obliged to make some

slight show of co-operation, surprised the French in their entrenchments at Keyzerslautern, and defeated them with considerable loss. In the month of July the French in their turn, under the brave general Desaix, attacked the Prussians, and carried, amid a terrible fire, the important posts occupied by prince Hohenloe on the Platoberg, a high mountain in the territory of Deux-Ponts. In a few days they repeated their attack upon the whole chain of posts from Neustadt to the Rhine with splendid success, and both Austrians and Prussians, each reproaching the other, were obliged to retreat with the greatest precipitation. The Imperial army re-crossed the Rhine, and the Prussians retired towards Guntersbloom and Mentz. The recent acquisition of Keyzerslautern was abandoned to the republicans, who again occupied the cities of Worms, Spire, and Treves: and this was the whole *equivalent* received from the king of Prussia in return for the enormous subsidy of two millions granted by the British parliament to that selfish, crafty, and unprincipled monarch, who, in a note transmitted to the circles of Franconia and Suabia; indignantly complained "that the Imperial court had put a false construction upon the treaty with England, who, though pledged to pay the subsidy, had no right to dispose at her pleasure of the Prussian army."

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Campaign
in Spain,—
and in Italy.

On the side of Spain and Italy also the armies of the republic were eminently successful. During the campaign of 1793, the Spaniards had entered France, and meeting with little opposition had captured the city of Bellegarde, and obtained, in various engagements, some indecisive advantages: but the republicans, who were at first compelled to stand on the defensive, became at length the assailants. In the month of November they penetrated into the province of Catalonia, and in the beginning of February following a battle was fought near St. Jean de Luz, in which the French were conquerors. In the month of May another victory was gained near Ceret; and soon afterwards a third, of far more importance than the former two, over the principal Spanish army posted in the vicinity of Collioure, by general Dugommier, the whole of the baggage and artillery falling into the hands of the French. A column was ordered by the Convention to be erected in memory of this exploit. The cities of Urgel, St. Elmo, and Bellegarde, so recently captured, surrendered to the armies of France, conducted by the heroic Dugommier. The Spaniards also, under their general, the count de l'Union, fought with great bravery, but were overpowered by superior skill and numbers. Soon after the recapture of Bellegarde, general Dugommier ob-

tained another signal victory, but was, at the close of it, unfortunately killed by the bursting of a shell. His death was avenged in a short time by the defeat and death of his gallant opponent, the count de l'Union. On the western side great advantages were gained by general Moncey, and the towns of Fontarabia and St. Sebastian fell into the hands of the French; the city of Pampeluna itself was menaced with a siege, and a deep and dangerous impression made upon the whole extent of the Pyrénean frontier.

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In Italy, to use the inflated style of M. Barrère in his report to the Convention, victory was also in a state of permanence. The Piedmontese had, at the command of the Sardinian monarch, risen in a mass; but, being destitute of the enthusiasm of liberty, they constituted a body without a soul. The French forced the famous pass of Mount Cenis, took possession of the city and territory of Oneglia, and made themselves masters of a great part of the open country of Piedmont.

It is now time to avert our eyes from scenes of disaster and disgrace, and to take a concise view of the naval war, in which England maintained in all parts of the world her great and wonted superiority. A very formidable armament, destined to act in the West Indies under the command of two most distinguished and

Naval transactions.

BOOK gallant officers, sir Charles Grey and sir John
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Jervis, rendezvoused early in the year in Carlisle-
1794. bay at Barbadoes, whence they sailed, on the

Conquest of 3d of February, to the attack of Martinico,
Martinico, which surrendered, after a resolute resistance of seven weeks. Fort Royal was carried by escalade with extraordinary exertions of valor, particularly on the part of captain Faulkner of the Zebra, who entered the harbour through the fire of all the batteries, and laid his sloop alongside the walls. Astonished at his audacity, and the rest of the naval armament soon coming into view, the fort struck its colors to the Zebra, almost at the same moment that the land forces, under colonel Symes, forced and entered the town triumphantly on the opposite side*.— About the same period Cape Tiburon, and some other posts in St. Domingo, were reduced to submission by colonel Whitlock and commodore Ford. No sooner was the reduction of Martinico effected than the troops were re-embarked, and

of St. Lucia
and Guada-
loupe.

landed on the island of St. Lucia, which capitulated on the 4th of April; and upon the 11th of the same month the fleet and army arrived off Guadaloupe, which, after a short but brave defence, surrendered, with its dependencies, on the 20th. After these glorious successes sir

* Vide official accounts.

Charles Grey returned to Martinico, leaving general Dundas, brother to the minister, an officer of distinguished merit, to command at Guadaloupe. The sequel of the history of this expedition is less flattering. General Dundas died of the fever incident to the climate, at Guadaloupe, after a few days illness, early in June. This great loss was followed by other disastrous circumstances. A French squadron appeared off the island, June the 5th, from which a body of troops landing under the command of a most daring and skilful leader, Victor Hugues, attacked Fort Fleur d'Épée, which they carried by storm; and the English retreated with considerable loss to Fort Louis. This also was soon evacuated; and the troops, shattered and disheartened, took refuge in Basse-terre. Sir Charles Grey, on the first intelligence of this attempt, sailed from St. Kitt's with all the force he could collect, and, landing on the island of Guadaloupe on the 19th of June, he made an attempt, July 2, on the post of Point-à-Petre; but fortune, upon this occasion, was not propitious, and the general was, after great efforts of valor, repulsed, with the loss of 600 men. Upon this the forces were re-embarked; and Basse-terre, after a long and vigorous resistance, with the whole island and its dependencies, again reverted to France.

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Guadaloupe
re-captured.

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In the course of the summer the important conquest was effected of Port au Prince, the chief of the French settlements on the western side of St. Domingo. The English flag was erected on the fort by brigadier-general Whyte, who commanded on this expedition, on the anniversary of the king's birth-day. This trivial circumstance inspired the delusive hope "that the entire island would shortly be reduced to his majesty's dominion."

Conquest of
Corsica.

The progress of the English arms in the Mediterranean, subsequent to the evacuation of Toulon, was also flattering. Early in the month of February, 1794, lord Hood proceeded for Corsica, which was in a state of revolt against the Convention, the insurgents being excited to this resistance by the English influence, under the conduct of their antient and popular chief, Paschal Paoli, who had been some years since restored to his country with honor by the Constituent Assembly. Mortella, Tornelli, and St. Fiorenza, being successively surrendered or evacuated, the Corsicans who adhered to the French interest retreated to Bastia, which resisted the united efforts of the Anglo-Corsicans and English till the 24th of May, when it capitulated on honorable terms; and the whole island, excepting Calvi, which held out till August, submitted to the English. This appears to have been the

favorite conquest of the war. Letters of con-
 vocation were forthwith issued for the Assembly
 of the General Consulta to be held at Corte, the
 ancient capital of Corsica, on Sunday the 8th of
 June 1794, of which general Paoli was elected
 president. The representatives of the Corsican
 nation immediately voted the union of Corsica
 with the British crown, and a constitutional act
 was framed extremely similar to the French
 model of 1791, which had been so lately branded
 by lord Auckland, ambassador at the Hague, as
 the work of miscreants, and the offspring of pre-
 sumption and vanity. Sir Gilbert Elliot, repre-
 sentative of his Britannic majesty, formally accept-
 ed this act on his part, and immediately assumed
 the magnificent title of Viceroy. "Our minds
 have been prepared by PROVIDENCE," said his
 Excellency, "for the fate which awaited us. The
 event of this happy day is only the completion
 of wishes we had previously formed. To-day our
 hands are joined, but our hearts have long been
 united; and our motto should be—*Amici e non
 di ventura.*"

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King of
 Great Bri-
 tain accepts
 the gift of
 the crown of
 Corsica from
 a Corsican
 convention.

The most remarkable features of this demo-
 cratic form of monarchy, which gratuitously
 granted more than had even been asked by the
 most daring reformers of Britain, were—the
 establishment of the right of universal suffrage—
 the dissolution of the legislative body at the end

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of two years—no senate or house of nobles—municipalities chosen by the people in every *pieve* or district ; and, lastly, the unlimited right of toleration without tests or penal laws.

Far from admitting, as was formally required of America, the unlimited and unconditional power of the British legislature to make laws for Corsica in all cases whatsoever, the Constitutional Act merely and coldly says, “That the parliament of Corsica will always manifest its readiness and deference to *adopt* all regulations, consistent with its present constitution, which shall be enacted by his majesty in his parliament of Great Britain for the extension and advantage of the external commerce of the empire and its dependencies ;” which concession plainly amounted to an affirmation of the right of the Corsican parliament to reject such regulations as should not appear to them to have this tendency. The inherent sovereignty of the people is not only implied in the formation of this constitution, by a national convention “possessed,” as the preamble of the act says, “of a specific authority for this purpose,” but expressly recognised ; for the viceroy, in declaring his acceptance of it, “on the part of the sovereign king of Corsica, George III. king of Great Britain,” says, “If his majesty, therefore, accepts the crown *which you have agreed to offer him*, it

is because he is determined to protect, and never to enslave, those from whom he receives it ; and, above all, because it is *given*, and not seized upon by violence." Upon the whole, according to the ideas which Mr. Burke and the other virulent declaimers against the French constitution and the mode of its establishment had so long labored to inculcate, this was a most Jacobinical transaction in all its relations. But men of a different description saw in it a noble, though unintentional, acknowledgment on the part of the British government that the principles on which the French revolution was originally founded were perfectly just ; and that all the dreadful evils consequent upon it arose not from the principles themselves, but from the opposition made to their establishment. By this transaction another crown, such as it was, devolved upon the head of the king of Great Britain ; but the advantage which the people of Britain were to reap from this political connection with Corsica never having been explained, must remain among the deep and inscrutable arcana of government.

In the month of May, the Brest fleet, amounting to twenty-six, afterwards increased to thirty, sail of the line, under the command of admiral Villaret, anxious for the fate of a large convoy from America, ventured to put to sea, though it

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Victory obtained over the Brest fleet by lord Howe.

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1794. was known that lord Howe, the British admiral, with a superior force, from which, however, he was obliged to detach a squadron of six ships of the line as convoy with the East India fleet to Cape Finisterre, was cruising off the harbour to intercept it. Early on the 28th, and before the detached squadron had rejoined the Admiral, the fleets came in view ; and, after some distant firing, the English commander having by his masterly manœuvres at length gained the weather-gage of the enemy, bore down upon them with full sail on the 1st of June. A close and desperate engagement ensued, in which the hostile fleets exhibited prodigies of valor. To use the expression of St. André the French commissioner on board—"the contest was maintained not merely with courage, but fury ; it was the contention of Rome and Carthage." Several ships on both sides were dismasted ; and the carnage, particularly on the part of the French, was dreadful. *Le Vengeur*, of seventy-four guns, went down during the action ; and while the lower-deck ports were actually under water, and destruction was inevitable, the air resounded with the cry of *VIVE LA REPUBLIQUE !* At length the French admiral, finding the contest too unequal, crowded off, and was followed by those of his ships in a condition to carry sail. Of the others, six remained in possession of the British admiral,

and were brought safe into Plymouth. The French were consoled in some degree for this humiliating defeat by the attainment of the object for which they risked the engagement: their American convoy, amounting to 160 sail, valued at five millions sterling, and conveying an immense quantity of provisions and naval stores, arrived safe in port a few days after the engagement, eluding the vigilance of admiral Montague, who on his return with the squadron from Cape Finisterre had taken his station off the harbour of Brest.

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During this summer wonderful changes took place in the interior state and government of France. Scarcely had the republican party in 1792 accomplished the overthrow of the constitution, than they became themselves divided into two opposite and inveterate factions, that of the Gironde and that of the Mountain. The latter had no sooner enjoyed a horrid and sanguinary triumph over their unfortunate opponents than a second division was observed; and the contest, equally violent with the former, now lay between the Jacobins and the Cordeliers. In the midst, however, of scenes of terror and of death, there are to be found some incidents which tend to soothe and solace the feelings of afflicted humanity. On the 3d of February, 1794, three deputies from the island

Proceedings
of the French
Convention.

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of St. Domingo, one of whom was a negro, and the others gens-de-couleur, were received by the Convention as the representatives of the colony. On the succeeding day one of the deputies gave an affecting account of the troubles of this island; and they had no sooner concluded than La Croix eagerly moved the entire abolition of slavery within the dominions of France. The National Convention rose spontaneously to decree the proposition, and the men of colour were all adopted into the number of French citizens.

The prodigies of valor performed by the republican armies, and the successes achieved by them during the latter months of the preceding campaign, in some degree opened the eyes of the confederate princes; and from the proceedings of the Convention at this period it appears that some secret advances had been made on the part of the allies to establish a truce for two years between the belligerent powers. In a report made by Barrere, early in the month of February, from the committee of Public Safety, he declared, "that the coalesced kings were willing *provisionally* to acknowledge the French republic." This was followed by loud bursts of laughter. "Well," said the orator, "let us *provisionally* destroy all tyrannical governments." The bursts of laughter changed to acclamations of applause. A few days after-

wards the president of the Convention, adverting to this proposition, exclaimed, "What singular generosity is this towards a nation of twenty-five millions of souls, which has 1,200,000 heroes in arms! Depend, citizens, on the incorruptible mountain. It is against this rock that our enemies are wasting their strength!" Such was the unshaken and well-founded confidence, which in the midst of internal discord and distraction was placed by the existing government of France in the spirit and resources of the country.

At the head of the faction of the Cordeliers were Hebert, Ronsin, Anarcharsis Clootz, styled the Apostle of Atheism, &c.—men who, to conciliate the populace, adopted the wildest theories, decried all religion, preached equality in the absurdest extent, and recommended publicly an agrarian law. In the beginning of March the Table of the Rights of Man, in the hall of the Cordeliers, was covered with a black crape; and Hebert, from the tribune of the society, affirmed that tyranny existed in the republic. This was sufficient to arouse the jealousy of Robespierre. Virtue and ferocity were declared in the Convention, by the wretch Couthon, to be the requisite order of the day. On the 25th March, Hebert, Ronsin, Clootz, and many others of the same association, were arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and of course con-

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1794. demned to the guillotine. These executions were followed by those of Fabre d'Eglantine, Chabot, Bazire, Julien of Toulouse, Herault Sechelles, and other popular deputies of the Convention, on pretence of their having engaged in counter-revolutionary projects. But what excited still more amazement was the arrest of Danton, Philippeaux, and Camille Desmoulins, &c. on the 31st of March. It is remarkable that St. Just, in the report presented on this occasion, makes the profession of atheism a principal charge against Fabre d'Eglantine. On the 2d of April, these persons and many others their pretended accomplices, fell under the fatal axe of the guillotine. Danton was a man of great parts, and seems to have been regarded by Robespierre in the light of a rival for power and superiority, and such rivalry was, in the view of that execrable tyrant, the most heinous of all offences.

At this period it was decreed by the Convention that the remains of the famous Jean Jacques Rousseau should be deposited in the beautiful church of St. G  n  vieve, now styled the Pantheon. The president, upon this occasion, said, "That illustrious patriot has left excellent lessons to mankind, to love liberty, morality, and the Divinity. These lessons will for ever confound those false philosophers who profess neither to believe in a Providence nor in a

Supreme Being—the only consolation of man-kind in their last moments.”—Religion was now again the order of the day in the National Convention. The number of public executions, upon the most frivolous and wanton pretences, still continued, nevertheless, to be almost incredible. M. Palissot, a dramatic author who had many years before written a comedy in ridicule of Rousseau, was now destined to expiate this offence with his life. He wrote to the municipality an acknowledgment of his error, and of the merits of Rousseau: “Yet,” said he, “if Rousseau was a god, you ought not to sacrifice human victims to him.”—This striking expression produced its effect, and Palissot was released from his imprisonment.

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In the month of May, the virtuous princess Elizabeth, sister of the late king, and his faithful companion under misfortune, was, without any shadow of pretext, brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and, after a few vague and insolent interrogatories, barbarously condemned to the punishment of the guillotine, which she suffered without betraying any other emotions than those of humble and pious resignation.

On the 30th of this month Barrère brought forward the infamous decree for allowing no quarter to the English or Hanoverian troops: but the French officers and soldiery unanimously

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refused to carry this abominable mandate into execution : and the commander in chief of the British forces, on this occasion, to his lasting honor, declared, by a public proclamation, his unalterable resolution not to imitate this horrid barbarity. In order to demonstrate that the most atrocious acts may be as intimately associated with religious hypocrisy, as with open profaneness, a grand festival was, a few days afterwards, (June 8,) observed in honor of the SUPREME BEING ! The president of the Convention, from the midst of a spacious amphitheatre adorned with festoons and garlands, made an oration to the immense surrounding multitude, exhorting them to adore the great Author of Nature. During the performance of a solemn symphony, he descended from the tribune armed with the torch of Truth ; and approached an hideous monster representing Atheism, which, on being touched by the torch, instantly vanished, and the resplendent figure of Wisdom occupied its place. Such are the gaudy shows which human folly has ever been eager to substitute for rational devotion, and in which the divine simplicity of the pure religion of nature is obscured and lost.

Fall of Robespierre.

No sooner had Robespierre reached the summit of power, than the basis on which it stood seemed to totter under him. After the pro-

scription and immolation of thousands to his own safety, tortured by ceaseless suspicion and remorse, he sought in vain to convert his couch of thorns into a bed of roses. That terror which he had infused into the minds of all, at length appeared to have taken entire possession of his own. He was continually haunted with the apprehensions of approaching death: solitary and abstracted in the midst of company, he seemed to hear only the cries of the victims whom he had sacrificed; and to discern, through the medium of a disturbed vision, nought but mystic characters which portended his speedy and inevitable destruction.

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On the 10th of June, Bourdon de l'Oise, a member of the Conventional Assembly, had the courage to demand that the decree which affirmed the inviolability of the national representatives should be again established; and that no member should be brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal but in consequence of a decree of accusation passed by the assembly itself, instead of an order from the Committee of Safety, where Robespierre, and the vile instruments of his horrible tyranny, Couthon and St. Just, bore absolute sway. This was carried before the tyrant could recover from his surprise. From this time the party formed against him rapidly increased, and even his celebrated colleague, the

BOOK artful, the penetrating, and insidious Barrère,
 XX. took a secret, though efficient, part in plotting
 1794. his overthrow.

The suspicions entertained by the tyrant of his danger appeared from the successive speeches which he pronounced at the hall of the Jacobins at this period; and one in particular, on the 16th of July, in which he declared that a counter-revolutionary committee actually existed in the republic. That he meditated the speedy destruction of all those whom he now regarded as his enemies was manifest; and it was rumored that he meant at the same time openly to assume the office of Dictator of the Republic. Whether he was aware that Barrère was of the number of his adversaries, is doubtful. That extraordinary man made, on the 23d of July, a speech in the Convention, well calculated to lull him into a false security. "This government, (said he) is odious on account of its energy. Let me conjure the Convention not to sleep on its victories, but to strike terror among the conspirators." On the 25th of July, Robespierre delivered an oration in the Convention, in which he plainly indicated his future project. "What a terrible use (said he) have our enemies made of a word which at Rome was applied only to a public function!" The speech was heard with symptoms of contempt; many things in it con-

tested ; and it was evident that his influence in the Convention was lost. This was the critical moment. The armed force of Paris, under Henriot, was still at his devotion ; but his resolution, and even his sagacity, seemed to fail him ; his popularity was evidently declining, and the applauses of the galleries attended the speeches of his opponents, who, on their part, perceived that they had already gone too far to recede.

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In the sitting of the 9th Thermidor (July 27), Billaud Varennes complained openly “ that the armed force of Paris was entrusted to parricidal hands. Henriot (said he) was denounced as the accomplice of Hebert. One man alone had the audacity to support him, Need I name him?—Robespierre.” He then proceeded to recount with energy his acts of blood and oppression : and accused him, without reserve, of harbouring an infamous design of making himself dictator. “ In order to effect his purpose (said this orator) he has resolved to mutilate the Convention, to leave there only men as vile as himself, and to inflict a fatal blow on the representatives of the people. I proclaim, I proclaim the tyranny of Robespierre.” Bursts of applause resounded from all parts of the Hall. Robespierre here reddening with fury, darted towards the tribune, while a number of voices exclaimed “ Down with the tyrant ! Down with the tyrant !” Loaded

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1794. with universal imprecations, he was not suffered to speak in his own defence; and Tallien rose “to congratulate the Convention that the veil was at length withdrawn, and the real conspirators unmasked. Every thing (said he) announces that the enemy of the nation is about to fall. . In the house of that guilty man, who now stands humbled with the consciousness of detected crimes, and overwhelmed with that detestation which his infamous designs against liberty have so justly merited, were formed those lists of proscription which have stained with so much blood the altars of rising liberty. He copied the example of the detestable Sylla. His proscriptions were intended only to prepare the way for his own power and the establishment of a perpetual dictatorship.—Was it to subject ourselves to so abject and degrading a tyranny that we brought to the scaffold the last of the Capets, that we declared eternal war against kings, and swore to establish liberty as the price of life? No! the spirit of liberty has not sunk so low. I invoke the shade of the virtuous Brutus; like him I have a poinard to rid my country of the tyrant, if the Convention do not deliver him to the sword of justice. Let us, republicans, accuse him with the courage which springs from loyalty in the presence of the French people: and, as it is of the utmost importance that the

chiefs of the armed force do no mischief, I move that Henriot and all his staff be arrested. I move that our sittings be permanent until the sword of the law has secured to us this revolution. I also move that ROBESPIERRE and his creatures be immediately arrested." These motions were passed amid tumults of applause.—Barrère was now called upon to speak in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, and after proposing that the national guard resume its original organization, and that the mayor of Paris be responsible for the safety of the national representation, he joined without reserve in the invectives against the fallen tyrant, who has had the art, said he, of wearing so many different masks ; and, when he had no longer occasion for his creatures, has made no scruple to send them to the guillotine, as Camille Desmoulins, Bazire, Chabot, and others.—Robespierre, lost in amazement and consternation, submitted without farther resistance to the decree of the Convention, and was guarded by the proper officers to the prison of the Luxembourg ; the governor of which, being one of his creatures, refused to receive him ; upon which he was conducted to the Hotel-de-Ville.

In the mean time Henriot had found means to escape, and, with the activity inspired by desperation, rallied his adherents. Dividing his forces into three bodies, he attempted at once to attack

BOOK the Hotel-de-Ville, the Committee of Public
XX. Safety, and the Convention. The representa-
1794. tives of the people shewed in this moment of
danger much courage and presence of mind. No sooner were they apprised of the state of things than they declared Robespierre and his accomplices outlaws and traitors. Barras was appointed commander-in-chief: and a proclamation was issued, exhorting the people to assert their liberty, and defend the National Convention. The sections of Paris came in succession to the bar, and took an oath to acknowledge no authority but that of the Convention. The president, Collot d'Herbois, in returning thanks to them in the name of the Assembly, expressed his hope that the sun would not go down before the heads of the traitors should fall. In consequence of these measures the troops of Henriot almost universally abandoned him; and he himself, with the remainder, took possession of the Hotel-de-Ville. Here, at two hours after midnight, they were vigorously assaulted by a determined party of the conventional guard, headed by Bourdon de l'Oise and other commissioners of the Convention, who rushed boldly forward into the hall of the commune. The insurgents, after a short and fruitless resistance, attempted in the last agonies of wild despair to turn their arms against them-

selves. Robespierre, already wounded in the side by a sabre, discharged a pistol in his mouth with no other effect than to shatter and disfigure his countenance. Le Bas shot himself dead upon the spot, and Couthon stabbed himself with a poinard. Henriot, while haranguing the populace from an upper window, was thrown down by their desire, and shockingly wounded by the violence of the fall. At six in the morning the Convention suspended its sitting. The victory being now decided, Robespierre and the rest of the criminals outlawed by the Convention were immediately conveyed to the Revolutionary Tribunal, merely for the purpose of identifying their persons, and then re-conveyed to the Palace of Justice, and, on the evening of the same day, (July 28), to the number of twenty-one, executed in the Place de Révolution, amid the loudest and most universal acclamations of joy ever known. The eyes of the spectators were chiefly fixed upon Robespierre, Couthon, and Henriot, who exhibited a ghastly picture of blood, mingled with dust, and covered with wounds. Robespierre was executed last, but remained on the scaffold wholly speechless, and petrified with horror.

Such was the merited doom of a tyrant, destined, by universal consent, to be ranked in the black catalogue of the Neros, the Catilines, and

BOOK the Borgias, whose names are held up from age
XX. to age to the eternal execration of mankind.

1794. Immediately after this great and happy event a very general alteration and melioration took place in the different branches of the provisional government of France. The Jacobin Club was entirely demolished, and the remains of the Gironde party, excluded and proscribed from the month of May 1793, to the number of seventy-one, were now restored to their seats in the Convention. Dumas, president of the horrid Revolutionary Tribunal, Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, Carriere, conventional commissioner the destroyer of La Vendée, and various others of the same description, lost their lives most deservedly on the public scaffold. At the same time hundreds were released from the different state prisons, who, but for the late revolution, would probably have fallen miserable victims to the Robespierrian tyranny; and the infamous decree of the Convention, for refusing quarter to the English and Hanoverian soldiery, was formally rescinded. The insurgents of the departments of La Vendée and La Loire had never been completely subdued, and thousands were still sheltered in the natural recesses of that romantic country, under their leaders Charette and Stofflet. A general amnesty, however, being now published, they almost universally laid

down their arms, and submitted to the authority of the Convention. But it deserves remark, that, during the most critical periods of this unparalleled revolution, amid internal contention and convulsion, the Gallic, like the Roman republic, rose victorious over the world; and since the subversion of the antient monarchy, the spirit of atheism and anarchy had uniformly triumphed over that of superstition and despotism.

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The miscellaneous events of the year in Britain still remain to be related. In the month of April Mr. Jay, chief-justice of the United States of America, arrived in London, as minister plenipotentiary, to adjust the existing differences between that republic and the British government. His reception was at the first cool and revolting; but in proportion as the allied armies receded, it was remarked that the negotiation with America advanced. The general state of things in England was at this period so truly unpleasant, and the differences which prevailed in politics under the present administration entered so deeply into private and social life, and were so subversive of its comforts, that great numbers of families of the old Whig stamp, whose ancestors had been most warmly attached to the principles of the revolution, and to the Hanoverian succession, now sought refuge in

Arrival of
Mr. Jay,
ambassador
extraordina-
ry from
America to
the court of
London.

Emigrations
to America.

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the bosom of the American republic. Among other emigrants of this description was the celebrated Dr. Priestley, who had been driven from his philosophical retirement in the centre of the kingdom by the mad outrages of a barbarous populace, excited and encouraged by persons, however exalted above them in rank, scarcely less barbarous than they. A Chatham, a Lansdown, or a Fox, would have paid just reverence to the virtues and talents of this illustrious character; whose zeal, as a theologian, for the diffusion of his peculiar tenets, was both natural and laudable. If his opinions were erroneous, argument might be opposed by argument, and the cause of truth would be eventually the gainer. But, under the administration of Mr. Pitt, bigotry and malignity advanced with an accelerated progress, and every species of improvement, moral, intellectual, or political, seemed gradually to become the object first of cold indifference to this insidious statesman, then of dislike, and at length of fear, of hatred, and of horror. "Friends of the miserable," says a writer of sensibility and genius*, "You, who presented Mr. Pitt with your confidence, because you expected he would realize your hu-

* "Essay on the Public Merits of Mr. Pitt," by Dr. BEDDOES.

mane wishes, refer the influence this man has exerted upon his age to the standard of your feelings, and in his actions try if you can discover not the habit, but a few casual sallies of goodness." When such a man bore sway it cannot be a matter of wonder that the persecuted and oppressed should be ardently desirous to withdraw far beyond the sphere of his baleful influence; though this could not in the nature of things be effected without making great and mournful sacrifices. It is true that philosophy, though it cannot and ought not to destroy the finer feelings of human nature,—nay, though it adds to their force and fervor, affords consolations in adversity, which, to gross and vulgar minds, must remain for ever unknown. "A wise man," says a celebrated writer, who was, at the time he penned these beautiful reflections, an exile from his native land, "looks upon himself as a citizen of the world; and when you ask him where his country lies, points, like Anaxagoras, with his finger to the heavens.—Let us march therefore intrepid wherever we are led by the course of human accidents. On what coast soever we are thrown by them we shall not find ourselves absolute strangers. We shall meet with beings endowed with the same faculties, and subject to the same laws of nature. We shall see the same virtues and vices varied in a

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1794. thousand different modes. We shall feel the same revolution of the seasons, and the same sun and moon will guide the course of the year. The same azure vault, bespangled with stars, will be spread over our heads ; and whilst our minds are occupied with high and philosophical contemplations, it imports us little what ground we may happen to tread upon *."

BOLINGBROKE'S *Letters on History*, vol. ii. p. 246,

* The language and sentiments of the bigots who pretend to candor are well described by the celebrated Wieland in his Tract on Liberty of Reasoning. "We wish not to tyrannize over consciences ; you are at liberty to believe what you can : only get out from among us ; lay down your offices ; give up your incomes ; quit your habitations ; forsake your country ; renounce your whole civil existence. Go and look out for a place in the sandy wilds of Africa, or in the desolated islands of the Southern Ocean, where you may philosophize and be hungry as much as you please."

Although the general reception which Dr. Priestley met with in America was such as his high character so justly merited, he soon had occasion to see and feel that bigotry and malevolence were not confined to England. In a letter from Mr. Jefferson, dated January 18, 1800, that distinguished statesman and patriot thus expresses himself, "How deeply have I been chagrined at the persecutions which fanaticism and monarchy have excited against you even here. I regretted that your friend, before he had fixed a choice of position, did not visit the valleys on each side the Blue Ridge in Virginia.—You would have found there equal soil, the finest climate and most healthy on the earth, the homage of universal reverence and love, and the power of the country spread over you as a shield."

The persons who in the month of May had BOOK XX. been committed to prison, on the charge of a 1794. democratic conspiracy to overturn the government, were kept in close confinement the whole of the summer. It also happened that two men, Trials in Scotland for high-treason. Watt and Downie, on grounds totally different, were brought to trial in Scotland for high-treason early in September; and this incident might be regarded as the prologue to the fearful and bloody tragedy which it was in contemplation of the administration to perform in England; and their conviction might be supposed to have a powerful effect on the minds of the English jurists. Watt was a spy employed by government, of a character infamously profligate, and he was instructed to enter himself as a member of the popular societies, in order to detect their secret machinations, and to give information against them whenever called upon. It appears from the trial that he deemed his services not sufficiently rewarded by government, and that he went so far beyond his commission as to propose, in all appearance seriously, treasonable attempts, —such as seizing the castle of Edinburgh, the public bank, and the persons of the judges, &c. —to some of his associates, who positively refused to adopt any measures for the attainment of their purposes “which might disturb the public peace, or shed the blood of their country.”

BOOK XX. 1794. men." This informer, being himself informed against, was apprehended and tried for this offence; and though he alleged with plausibility that he had spoken and acted with no other view than to discover the secret purposes of those whose conduct he was ordered to observe, the proofs against him were such as to induce the jury to return without hesitation a verdict of guilty, and he was soon after executed;—this government spy being the only man convicted and punished for the crime he was employed to detect. The second delinquent, Downie, was a weak illiterate mechanic, who had been foolish and culpable enough to listen in stupid silence, and probably astonishment, to the wild suggestions of Watt, without any active concurrence whatever. The jury found him also guilty, although the offence could in any equitable construction amount to no more than misprision of treason; but they thought proper to recommend him to mercy, and he afterwards received a pardon from the king.

Pretended
plot to assassinate the
king.

While this matter still continued to agitate in some degree the public mind, another subject of alarm arose, and a dreadful rumor was on a sudden raised of a design to assassinate the king. The persons implicated in this charge were one Le Maitre, apprentice to a watchmaker in Denmark-street; William Higgins, apprentice to a chemist in Fleet-street; and a

man of the name of Smith, who kept a book-stall in the vicinity of Lincoln's-inn. Their accuser was one Upton, also an apprentice or journeyman to a watchmaker. The conspirators were apprehended, by a warrant from the duke of Portland, on the 27th of September, and underwent several examinations before the privy-council. It was deposed by the informer, Upton, that an instrument was to have been constructed in the form of a walking-stick, inclosing by a secret device a brass tube, through which a poisoned dart was to have been *blown*, at some convenient opportunity, by the villain Le Maitre at his majesty; but when or where was not determined upon. This marvellous story, more fit for the Arabian tales than serious history, *seemed* for a time to be credited by the ministry, and the persons accused were committed for trial; but, after a long and severe imprisonment, the evidence against them was found so inconsistent, absurd, and incredible, that the whole affair fell into contempt, and the men were, without any trial, declared innocent of the charge, and set at liberty.

Under the first impression made by this ridiculous fable, the special commission of Oyer and Terminer, issued for the trial of the state prisoners confined in the Tower of London on a charge of high-treason, was opened at the Sessions-

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House, Clerkenwell, by the president lord chief justice Eyre, with an elaborate charge to the grand jury, who, in the course of their proceedings, found a bill of indictment against Thomas Hardy, John Thelwall, John Horne Tooke, and ten other persons,—Thomas Holcroft, one of the number, who, by concealment, had escaped the previous tædium of confinement, voluntarily surrendering himself in court upon the occasion; and on the 25th of October, they were arraigned before the Special Commission at the Old-Bailey. The members of the jury sworn to try the general issue of this memorable cause were not only very zealous friends of the government, but adherents of the administration, and most of them members of the loyal associations in and near London; but, through the admirable precautions of the law, they were also men impartial, intelligent, and of characters highly respectable. The indictment was of uncommon length, and contained no less than nine overt-acts of high-treason, all resolvable into the general charge, that these persons did conspire to summon delegates to a national convention with a view to subvert the government of the country and to levy war against the king.

By a long-established construction of law, the *attempt* to levy war against the government, or, in other words, any conspiracy against the

government, is no less high-treason than the *actual* levying of war, which is declared to be treason by the original statute of Edward III.; because it is, by no very harsh interpretation, presumed to involve in it a design against the life of the king, necessarily endangered by such an attempt, which design is also declared to be treason by the express words of that famous statute. The real crime, therefore, divested of the technical phraseology of the law, charged upon these people, was their conspiring to employ means of coercion and force against the government in order to accomplish its absolute subversion, or at least to effect a material change and alteration in it. The attorney-general, sir John Scott, spoke no less than nine hours, in confirmation of the accusation, and with the view of proving the overt-acts charged against them in the indictment, which consisted merely in a tedious recapitulation of the whole proceedings of the two associations, which had been long known to the nation at large, and were publicly advertised in the common newspapers. These proceedings, from their palpable want of decorum, temper, and judgment, had excited the extreme disapprobation of all intelligent persons, and of none more than the advocates of liberal and rational reform; but that they amounted to the crime of high-treason was an

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BOOK idea too extravagant to enter into the head
 XX. of any man but that of an apostate patriot or a
 1794. court-lawyer.

Thomas Hardy, shoemaker, the formidable chief of this pretended conspiracy, was the first person brought to the bar; and against him was the elaborate oration of the attorney-general primarily levelled: but happily for the prisoner, and eventually for the public, Mr. Erskine, so long the ornament of his profession, who was retained as counsel for Hardy, employed his great talents and brilliant eloquence with the most complete success in his defence, and that of his colleagues and associates, from the charge in question. "The transactions (Mr. Erskine remarked) which constituted the body of the proof were not the peculiar transactions of the prisoner, but of immense bodies of the king's subjects in various parts of the kingdom, assembled without the smallest reserve, and giving to the public, through the channel of the daily prints, a minute and regular journal of their proceedings. Not a syllable had we now heard that we had not been acquainted with for weeks and months before the prosecution was commenced."

The principal witnesses against the prisoner were divers infamous wretches, spies of government, of the name of Groves, Taylor, Lynam,

and Gosling. These vile instruments of corruption enumerated several instances of rash and inflammatory expressions, not personally affecting the prisoner Hardy, used at different meetings of the popular societies, which might, no doubt, come under the vague and general idea of sedition; but of any formed design of subverting the government, or of using any species of force or coercion respecting it, there existed no shadow of evidence. These democratic and over-heated partizans of reform unquestionably flattered themselves, that, in consequence of the weight which a petition from the national assembly, or convention of delegates, as they affected to style it—and which could be no other than a general committee deputed from the friends of reform in different parts of the kingdom, without the least pretence to exercise legal authority or jurisdiction—would carry with it, the legislature would become convinced of the political expediency and necessity of acceding to their prayer: and certainly the sense of the nation must be, in some mode or other, very forcibly expressed, before the parliament will, or indeed ought, to hazard so great, though probably so beneficial, a change. The legality of such a delegation as that in contemplation had never been questioned; on the

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contrary, it was justified by recent precedents both in England and Ireland : but to dream of opposing the authority of this conventional committee, without arms, without money, without the support of any persons more eminent than Thomas Hardy, shoemaker ; John Thelwall, itinerant lecturer ; Thomas Holcroft, comedian, &c. to that of the government by law established, would have been the extremity not of political criminality merely, but of folly, and even of madness. The grand object at which these associations aimed was unquestionably to effect a reform in parliament upon the visionary, if not pernicious, principles of the duke of Richmond,—universal suffrage and annual election. It is true that the societies alluded to contained a considerable proportion of concealed republicans, converts to the novel and extravagant doctrines of Paine ; and there could be no doubt but that these people hoped, and perhaps, in the height of their enthusiasm, believed, that a radical reform in parliament, upon democratic principles, would eventually lead to the establishment of a democratic government ; but this did not amount to treason, or even sedition, or to any offence whatever against the existing laws. Certainly, under the most severe control of the most despotic government, men cannot be amenable

to punishment for hoping and believing. As BOOK
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it was, however, well known that these asso- 1794.
ciations were infected with the leaven of re-
publicanism, it became government to keep
a watchful eye upon their proceedings, to check
their licentiousness, and, by a timely interposi-
tion, to curb the spirit of disaffection long before
it had reached the limits of high-treason; and
their rash and seditious conduct, if the grossest
disrespect and the most vulgar and virulent
abuse of government deserves the name of
sedition, laid them sufficiently open to legal
animadversion: but to accuse them of the
crime of treason was to confound things the
most easy to distinguish and the most im-
portant to be distinguished, and tended to
excite a powerful interest in the breasts of
all sober and dispassionate persons in favor of
men the tenor of whose public proceedings
they had previously and highly disapproved.
Had the ministry succeeded in this prosecution,
--which no attorney-general, however respect-
able his private character, or whatever plea
he might set up of professional duty, could
engage in, without incurring indelible dis-
grace,--had they once dipped their hands
in blood, they would in all human proba-
bility have gone on in the same sanguinary

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course till the whole land had become an
ACELDAMA—a scene of carnage and desolation.

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A miserably feeble attempt was made on the part of the crown-lawyers to prove that the associations in question had armed themselves against the government; whereas, on examination it appeared merely that a few pikes had been procured, to defend themselves, in case of necessity, against the attacks of the mob at Sheffield, and other populous places where they held their meetings. The Corresponding Society had applied to Mr. Francis to present their petition to parliament in the course of the preceding year; and that gentleman proved in evidence, that upon this occasion Mr. Hardy, secretary to the association, had voluntarily offered to come forward and produce all the books and papers of the society, to evince that there was nothing seditious in their conduct, and that their object was purely a parliamentary reform, upon the plan of the duke of Richmond. “And to whom,” as Mr. Erskine in his pleading asked, “did the duke of Richmond transmit and recommend his plan? To societies provided with half a dozen pikes? No; to colonel Sharman at the head of 10,000 men armed and in military array, and not commissioned by the king. These men so armed and arrayed actually

held a convention not secretly but in the face of day, and their demands were complied with. BOOK
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 Shall the prisoner at the bar then incur capital punishment, and the duke of Richmond be called to a seat in his majesty's cabinet council for the same act? Monstrous injustice!

"Plate Sin with gold

And the strong lance of Justice hurtless breaks;
 Arm it in rags, a pigmy straw doth pierce it."

SHAKESPEARE.

The trial was protracted to the unprecedented length of seven days; and, the evidence being closed, the jury, after a short deliberation, on the fifth of November, a day of happy auspices, brought in their verdict of NOT GUILTY—a verdict than which none ever pronounced in an English court of justice gave more exquisite satisfaction or was more extensively important in its consequences. Notwithstanding the numerous errors, obliquities, and corruptions which pervaded almost every part of the legislative and executive branches of government, it was perceived with transport that the fountain of criminal justice still retained all its original purity. The surrounding populace could not be prevented from attending *Citizen Hardy*, whose conduct had been throughout firm and tranquil, and the counsellors Erskine

BOOK and Gibbs, to their respective houses, amid the
XX. loudest acclamations of applause.

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After an interval of eleven days—no doubt days of chagrin and perplexity—on the part of the ministry, was brought to the bar of this high court of justice the celebrated John Horne Tooke, formerly and for many years a priest of the church of England—a man possessed of extraordinary intellectual talents, but of a peculiar kind, and blended with a considerable alloy of eccentricity. Of obscure and nameless origin, he suddenly appeared in the political world as an extravagant and erring spirit burst from its confine. He first distinguished himself as a violent partizan of Mr. Wilkes, at the time of the famous Middlesex contest—being then curate of Brentford, where the election was held. Such was the enthusiastic ardor of his patriotic zeal at this early period of his life, that, to preserve the liberties of his country inviolate, he publicly declared his readiness to dye his black coat red. He possessed no mean degree of learning and knowledge, and his powers of elocution and self-possession were very uncommon. His habitual influence over the wills and passions of those with whom he was connected indicated a mind of great energy. On some occasions

he exhibited himself to the judicious part of the public as a sincere and enlightened champion of the liberties of the people, and on others as an artful and aspiring demagogue. This extraordinary man had at the last general election offered himself as a candidate for the city of Westminster, alleging dissatisfaction at the virtual compromise which had taken place between the court and country parties in the persons of lord Hood and Mr. Fox. On the eventual failure of his hopes (although he polled a very great number of votes) he presented a petition to the house of commons against the return, drawn in the most unqualified and even audacious terms of political invective and reproach, but containing also much indisputable and melancholy truth. This petition, being referred, in the usual mode, to a committee, was declared frivolous and vexatious; but by a wise policy, too frequently and fatally departed from in matters of higher moment, no farther notice whatever was taken of it by the house.

On the trial of Mr. Tooke, it appeared, to the general surprize, that this gentleman, supposed so vehemently democratic, had been a remarkably guarded and temperate advocate of reform—that he very rarely attended the meetings of the societies—and had even incurred their suspicion and dislike on this account. He

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Mr. Pitt examined as
an evi-
dence:his incre-
dible want
of recol-
lection.

had frequently declared his attachment to the house of peers as an useful and necessary branch of the constitution; and he had uniformly reprobated the duke of Richmond's plan of universal suffrage. In a conversation with major Cartwright on the subject of reform, Mr. Tooke had made use of the following familiar but expressive illustration:—"You would go to Windsor, but I should choose to stop at Hounslow."—The most extraordinary circumstance attending this trial was the examination of the duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt, who were subpœna'd as witnesses by Mr. Tooke. The former was interrogated merely as to the authenticity of his famous letter to colonel Sharman, in order to shew that, as to the matter of reform, the corresponding and constitutional societies did not extend their ideas farther than one of his majesty's cabinet-ministers; and the latter to prove that the mode of conducting the business was similar to that adopted by Mr. Pitt and the reformers of 1780. On this occasion the peculiar features of Mr. Pitt's disposition conspicuously displayed themselves. To a variety of very material questions relative to the Westminster convention in that and the following years, he was seized with a total want of recollection. With great difficulty, however, he at length was brought to recollect a meeting at the Thatched-

House Tavern, in May, 1782. Mr. Tooke asked him what that meeting was but a convention of delegates from different great towns and counties of England, sent by committees of those towns and counties? He said he did not recollect how that meeting was composed.—Mr. Tooke then asked whether he did not recollect that it had been objected in the house of commons, respecting the petition actually presented, that it came from persons in a delegated capacity? He said he had no recollection of any such thing. Mr. Sheridan, being immediately afterwards examined, gave a perfectly clear and accurate account of the proceedings of that æra. He had met Mr. Tooke in 1780 at a convention, or meeting of delegates from different parts, who were to consider the best means of procuring a parliamentary reform, and to act for those who deputed them. He was himself a delegate for Westminster. The matter, he said, was notorious. He acknowledged that they had hopes by their numbers to create a kind of awe in the house of commons, not from the remotest idea of violence, but such an awe as that assembly must always feel when made acquainted with the wishes of the people at large. Mr. S. enumerated the places where these meetings were held—mentioning, in particular, Guildhall, the Thatched-House Tavern, and the duke of Richmond's at

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Privy-Garden. Here Mr. Pitt begged leave to correct his evidence, and confessed that he was present at some meetings in Privy-Garden, where there were delegates from different counties;—*i. e.* he confessed that he was himself chargeable with the very same act for the commission of which, now he had abandoned the cause of parliamentary reform, he had resolved to exterminate those by the sword of justice who still adhered to it under all difficulties and discouragements.*—The jury retired for a few minutes only previous to their returning a verdict

* It appears by referring to the public prints of the times, that on the 18th May 1782, a meeting was held at the Thatched-House Tavern of divers members of parliament friendly to a constitutional reform, and of MEMBERS of several COMMITTEES of COUNTIES and CITIES, who passed the following resolutions, sir William Plomer lord mayor of London being in the Chair, and the DUKE OF RICHMOND and the hon. WILLIAM PITT, &c. &c. being present.

Resolved unanimously,

That the motion of the hon. William Pitt on the 7th instant, for the appointment of a committee of the house of commons to enquire into the state of the representation of the people of Great Britain in Parliament, and to report the same to the house, and also what steps it might be proper in their opinion to take thereupon, having been defeated by a motion made for the order of the day, it has become indispensably necessary that application should be made to parliament by petition from the COLLECTIVE BODY of the PEOPLE in their respective districts, requesting a substantial reformation of the commons house of parliament.

Resolved

of NOT GUILTY. An involuntary burst of acclamation filled the court, which was instantly re-echoed by the populace without, who, as on the former occasion, escorted the counsel to their chambers.

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A feeble attempt was made to prosecute the original charge by proceeding to the trial of

Resolved unanimously,

That this meeting considering that a general application by the COLLECTIVE BODY to the commons house of parliament cannot be made before the close of the present session, is of opinion that the sense of the people should be taken at such times as may be convenient during this summer, in order to lay their several petitions before parliament early in the next session, when their proposition for a parliamentary reformation, without which neither the liberty of the nation can be preserved, nor the permanence of a wise and virtuous administration can be secured, may receive that ample and mature discussion which so momentous a question demands.

As the most striking sequel to these Resolutions, may be subjoined the following *Count*, being the seventh of the indictment of the state prisoners.

“ And farther to fulfil, perfect, and bring to effect, their most evil and wicked treason and treasonable compassings and imaginations aforesaid, they maliciously and traitorously did meet, conspire, consult, and agree, among themselves and together with divers other false traitors whose names are to the said jurors unknown, unlawfully, wickedly, and traitorously, to subvert and alter, and cause to be subverted and altered, the LEGISLATURE, RULE, and GOVERNMENT, now duly and happily established in this kingdom, and to depose and cause to be deposed our said lord the king from the royal state, title, power, and government, of this kingdom.”

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John Thelwall—a man whose general indiscretion of character and conduct had been indeed sufficiently conspicuous, but against whom nothing was proved excepting some intemperate expressions at the famous popular meeting at Chalk-Farm, and in his lecture-room, which were supported only by the testimony of the spies, Lynam and Taylor, whose evidence was afterwards rendered nugatory, or worse, by that of two other witnesses. The jury, without hesitation, brought in a verdict of NOT GUILTY.

The conduct of the cabinet-ministers in this extraordinary business—their mode of investigating the transactions of the associations in question, and of securing the requisite evidence of the several witnesses for the crown in these successive trials—was such as fully to justify the memorable observation of Dr. Swift, who says, “that those diligent enquiries into remote and problematical guilt, with a new power of enforcing them by chains and dungeons to every person whose face a minister thinks fit to dis-

In order to form some judgment of that reign of terror which would have followed the conviction of Hardy and his associates, it is sufficient to know on evidence which remains uncontradicted, that of eighty warrants which were filled up during the sitting of the grand jury, fifty-three were actually signed and ready to be issued on the evening of the acquittal on the confident presumption of an opposite verdict.

like, are not only opposite to that maxim which declareth it better that ten guilty men should escape, than one innocent suffer, but likewise leave a gate wide open to the whole tribe of informers, the most accursed, prostitute, and abandoned race that God ever permitted to plague mankind."

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When we consider the state of parties in the kingdom at this time, the acquittal of these persons excited a much more general sensation of satisfaction than might previously have been expected. The truth is, that the selfish as well as the generous feelings were interested on this occasion; and, in the course of his pleadings, Mr. Erskine very happily quoted a remark of the celebrated Dr. Johnson on the acquittal of lord George Gordon:—"I am glad he was not convicted of this constructive treason; for, though I hate him, I love my country, and I love myself." Of all the wicked inventions of lawyers, the doctrine of constructive treason, by which unwary people may be convicted of a capital offence while unconscious of the violation of any law, is perhaps the worst. But Mr. Erskine, on this momentous occasion, spoke like a man inspired, and at once redeemed the honor of his profession, and established the safety of his country. Had the men arraigned upon such an accusation, supported by

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such evidence, been capitally convicted, and the sentence been carried into execution, it would most unquestionably have been an horrible murder, perpetrated in the forms and under the pretext of law. But the very supposition is a libel upon the glorious institution of JURIES.

That there existed at this period no legal evidence of the intention of the accused when assembled in convention, such as had already been actually and harmlessly held both in England and Ireland, to usurp the powers of government, is clear and manifest : that any such secret design not proveable by the established rules of evidence was really harboured by any individuals, there is no rational ground to believe : on the contrary, all circumstances concur to the forming of an opposite conclusion.

Lord Macartney's embassy to China.

In the autumn of this year arrived in England, from his celebrated embassy to the court of Peking, lord Macartney. The principal object of his mission was to conclude a commercial treaty with the government of China, and to obtain, if possible, an extension of privileges for the English merchants ; more particularly to procure permission to land their commodities at some port nearer to the capital than Canton. The ambassador took his departure from England, at the latter end of September 1792, in the Lion man of war of 64 guns, and

in the month of July following he reached Jangangfoe-Bay in the Yellow Sea, which washes the north-eastern coast of China, whence the ambassador and his train were conveyed up the great river Tyensing to the city of the same name, in junks or barges, under the escort of a mandarin guard, who were watchful to prevent the least communication with the inhabitants, pitching their tents at night exactly opposite the spot where the junks lay at anchor. On the 11th of August they arrived at Tyensing, where they received refreshments and presents, of no great value, on the part of the emperor, the famous Kien Long, who had already governed that vast empire with uninterrupted success and reputation more than half a century. From Tyensing they still proceeded in their voyage up the river to the city of Tong-tchew, within twelve miles of Pekin. After a short interval of rest at Tong-tchew, the ambassador and his secretary, sir George Stanton, set out in palanquins provided for the purpose, which conveyed them to the metropolis—the train following in covered carriages. The emperor being at this season of the year usually resident at Jehol, his summer-palace in Tartary, beyond the great wall, orders were sent that the ambassador should proceed thither. On the 7th of September he

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arrived at Jehol; and on the 14th his excellency was honored with his first audience of the emperor, at five o'clock in the morning. The ambassador had brought with him from England the most splendid and costly presents which were ever offered by one monarch to the acceptance of another; but it was observable that they were received with marked indifference, or rather haughtiness; and care had been taken to paint in large Chinese characters, upon the flags pendent from the yachts and land-carriages, 'AMBASSADOR bearing TRIBUTE from the Country of ENGLAND.' And although the emperor himself behaved with decorum and politeness to the ambassador, he would enter into no treaty, he would grant no new privileges; and well aware, as was plainly intimated, of the nature and extent of the usurpations of England in Hindostan, he would not suffer the king of Great Britain to set his cloven foot beyond the narrow spell-bound circle of Canton.

Early in the month of October the emperor and his court, attended by the ambassador and his train, returned to Peking, within a very short time subsequent to which his excellency had his last audience of his imperial majesty, who delivered to him a letter, in answer to that from the king of England, and also a POEM of his own composing inclosed in a roll covered with yel-

low silk, This was accompanied with several chests of presents; and the ambassador, who had made great preparations for passing the winter in Pekin, was officially apprized that this was the signal of departure. On the 9th of October his excellency and his suite left Pekin with some precipitation, and proceeded to Tong-tchew, whence they were conveyed in junks, as before, through the interior of that immense empire, by a variety of rivers and canals from the northern to the southern extremity of China, reaching Canton in perfect safety, after a variety of amusing adventures, Dec. 18, 1793, and in January following they embarked at Macao for England.

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The information which the secretary to the embassy, in a narrative of this romantic expedition published by authority, has given us of the state of the Chinese empire is extremely curious and interesting. A few particulars will not probably be deemed too wide a digression from the more proper subjects of the present history. It is remarked by the intelligent author, sir George Stanton, that regions out of Asia are scarcely referred to in the books of the Chinese, or noticed in their maps. The celebrated Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, visited the court of Pekin in the thirteenth century. He makes no mention of the Chinese wall, but it appears

BOOK XX. that he entered China on the side of Thibet,
1794. passing through the provinces Shensee and Shan-see. The present Tartar dynasty had continued, in 1793, during a course of four reigns, 149 years. Every square mile in China contains, upon an average, upwards of 300 inhabitants, in all 335 millions, in the fifteen provinces of China Proper, and exclusive of the Tartarian and Thibet territories beyond the great wall.—There are nine orders of mandarins; but the office is not hereditary, and the only public or personal distinction is that of being employed in the public service; and knowledge and virtue alone qualify for public employments.—When the mandarins, accompanying the embassy, were told that in England a child might claim, in virtue of his birth, the highest offices and dignities of the state, they could not sufficiently express their astonishment, and intimated that this was a matter unfit to be repeated to the emperor. From the entrance of the embassy into China not one person in the guise of a beggar had been seen, nor any one observed to solicit charity. In the intervals of military service the soldiers assume the common habit of the people, and are occupied in manufactures or the cultivation of land.—The government of China does not interfere with mere opinions. There is in China no STATE religion. None is

paid, preferred, or encouraged by it. The emperor is of one faith, many of the mandarins are of another, and the majority of the common people of a third, which is that of Fo. The possessions of the father are equally divided among all the sons; and the ancient public law of the empire is founded on the broadest basis of universal justice. The examinations in the public seminaries or schools of students for degrees are always public. Oral questions are put, and others in writing, to the candidates. The honors conferred upon those who succeed become the ascending steps which lead to all the offices and dignities of the state. A method of advancement so open to all classes of men tends to reconcile them to the power, from attaining which no individual is precluded. In these trials wealth must yield to talents and genius. The number of manufacturers bears but a very small proportion to that of husbandmen in China. Few parks or pleasure-grounds are to be seen. There are no commons or lands suffered to lie waste by the neglect or caprice, or for the sport, of great proprietors. Every large or ornamental building was found upon enquiry to be destined for some public use, or for the habitation of a man in office.—In seasons of calamity the emperor of China always comes forward: He orders the granaries to be

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opened: He remits the customary taxes to those who are visited by misfortune: He affords assistance to enable them to retrieve their affairs: He appears to his subjects as almost standing in the place of a tutelary divinity. In all public labors there appeared a promptitude and cheerfulness of obedience, which argued a confidential expectation of an adequate recompence. The execution of criminals, convicted of capital offences, takes place on the same day with circumstances of peculiar solemnity; the usages of the empire requiring the emperor formally to consult the mandarins of his council upon each case separately, in order to know whether he can with safety to the state avert the sentence.

Such are the customs, observances, and institutions of a stupendous empire, far exceeding in riches and population all the kingdoms of Europe; and which has been, from the earliest periods of history, celebrated for the profound wisdom of its government, and for that which is the necessary consequence of this wisdom—the unexampled prosperity of the people.

The British settlements in India enjoyed at this period a seasonable repose under the wise and equitable government of sir John Shore, successor to earl Cornwallis. The most remarkable occurrence of the present year in

Bengal was the death (April 27, 1794) of sir William Jones, who had been appointed, March 1783, a judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature in India on the recall of sir Elijah Impey, as if it were determined by this choice to rescue the English name and character from reproach, and to manifest by way of contrast how high public and private virtue could ascend. Sir William Jones had long been celebrated, as the wonder of the present age, for the profundity and universality of his attainments. As a linguist he was equally familiar with the modern and the antient, the occidental and the oriental, languages. As a writer and professor of jurisprudence he was not merely versed in the laws and usages of his native country, but deeply skilled in the Roman and Grecian, the Hindoo and Mahometan systems. He was at once a mathematician, a poet, and an historian. He excelled in musical, in chymical, and in botanical pursuits; and his attainments in every one of these different objects of research were such as might justify the supposition that he had made the study of it the great object of his life. Yet was that life circumscribed by the comparatively short term of forty-seven years. To his great and unrivalled intellectual accomplishments he added the highest moral excellence; and no greater or juster eulogium could

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Death of
sir William
Jones.

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be pronounced upon him, than that his virtues were equal to his talents. Europe and Asia acknowledged his worth, and mourned his loss. “Of the ability and conscious integrity with which he exercised the functions of a magistrate in India (lord Teignmouth, late sir John Shore, assures us) the public voice and public regret bore ample and merited testimony. The same penetration which marked his scientific researches distinguished his legal investigations and decisions, and his oratory was as captivating as his arguments were convincing*.” While yet on his voyage to India, he formed the plan of an institution for the purpose of investigating the history and antiquities, arts, science, and literature, of India. ‘It gave me,’ to use his own words in the preliminary discourse addressed to the members of the association, ‘one evening, on inspecting the map, inexpressible pleasure to find myself in a noble amphitheatre, almost encircled by the vast regions of Asia, the nurse of sciences, the inventress of delightful and useful arts, the scene of glorious actions, abounding in natural wonders, and infinitely diversified in the forms of religion and government. I could not help remarking how important and extensive a field was yet unex-

* Address to the Society for Asiatic Researches.

explored, and how many solid advantages unimproved.'—"Let us lament (says lord Teignmouth) that the spirit which dictated those learned and interesting dissertations, which form so large and valuable a portion of the records of our researches, is extinct, and that the voice to which we listened with improvement and rapture will be heard by us no more."

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In order to complete the political portrait of the present period, it is necessary to advert to the state of affairs in the continental kingdoms, not actually engaged in the confederacy against France.

The celebrated diet of Grodno, by which the second partition of Poland was indignantly ratified, terminated in extreme confusion after the coercive abolition of the constitution of 1791, and the re-establishment of that which preceded in 1772. At the beginning of the year 1794, baron d'Ingelstrohm, who had succeeded the count de Sievres as ambassador at Warsaw, demanded the erasure of every record and the surrender of every paper relative to the late constitution, which was passively submitted to. This act of humiliation only increased the insolence of the conquerors, whose oppression and outrages grew daily more insufferable. The court of Russia at length issued its mandate for the reduction of the military force of Poland to

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16,000 men. This was positively refused by several of the veteran regiments, particularly in that part of the kingdom bordering upon the metropolis, where general Madalinski appeared at the head of a great body of insurgents, who had resolved not to lay down their arms. The Russian ambassador was instructed to deliver to the permanent executive council an official document, requesting, or rather commanding, the Polish government to dispatch an army to oppose Madalinski, and likewise to take into custody every suspected person. The first of these demands was evaded; and to the latter it was replied that no Polish nobleman could be arrested before conviction. Early in the month of February (1794) appeared in the field the celebrated Kosciusko, who had already distinguished himself by his gallantry in America and his patriotism in Poland. After obtaining several advantages over the Prussians in their newly-acquired territories, he advanced towards Cracow, which was abandoned to him by the Russians in garrison there on the 24th of March. He then assembled the nobility and principal inhabitants at the Town-Hall, and was formally invested with the title of General amid the loudest applauses; after which he issued a proclamation, inviting the nation, in the most energetic terms, to shake off their fetters, and to unite

in forming a new confederation; and a solemn oath was taken by all present to maintain the constitution of 1791. In the mean time Warsaw was in a state of high fermentation. The king, wholly destitute of the public esteem and confidence, broken down by age, affliction, and infirmity, and absolutely incapable of those exertions which corresponded with his situation and character, had the culpable weakness to issue a proclamation exhorting his subjects to lay down their arms, instead of putting himself at their head; and rendered himself both odious and contemptible by accepting of a Russian guard for the protection of his person.

In the month of April general Kosciusko began his march from Cracow to Warsaw, with an army composed of such regular troops as he could collect, and reinforced by some thousand peasants armed with pikes. On the road he fell in with a strong corps of Russians detached by baron d'Ingelstrohm from Warsaw, to regain possession of Cracow. A fierce encounter ensued, and the Russians were in the end totally routed with great slaughter—the Polish peasantry, in their fury, giving no quarter to the enemy. The inhabitants of Warsaw now arose, and drove out the Russian garrison after an obstinate resistance. Kosciusko took immediate possession of the capital; in consequence of

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which the king, yielding passively to the course of events, and without being animated by a single spark of heroism or patriotism, declared himself head of the confederation. Addresses of congratulation were presented from all quarters, and every-where appeared symptoms of martial ardor—near 70,000 men, exclusive of peasantry, being, as was calculated, in arms before the end of May. But this force was dispersed in different bodies throughout the wide extent of Poland and Lithuania; and the vast armies of the powers allied for their destruction were advancing upon them with rapid steps on either side. In this emergency no chance of ultimate success could possibly remain but in the adoption of the daring and decisive measure of summoning a national convention, and of establishing a new constitution founded upon the broadest basis of democracy,—a constitution in the preservation of which every individual would feel himself deeply and permanently interested—a constitution which, as in France, would excite the genuine spirit of republican enthusiasm, which would convert Poland, like France, into an armed nation, and infuse into every breast the heroic, the determined resolution to conquer or die. But to a grand and glorious effort like this the genius and talents of Kosciusko did not appear

equal: on the contrary, a proclamation was published, stating, "That as the Polish insurrection took place upon principles essentially different from those prevailing in France, it should be differently conducted; and that the king," whose timidity and duplicity had rendered him justly despicable in the eyes of all, "should be treated with the deference and regard due to his rank." It is difficult to conceive whose favor Kosciusko could hope to conciliate by this tame and disgusting declaration. Had America, France, and it may be added England, hesitated in similar circumstances to proceed to the deposition of their respective sovereigns, the revolutions effected in these several countries would have borne for ever the appellation of treason and rebellion. The original principles of the French revolution were no other than the genuine and immutable principles of liberty; and although these principles were doubtless more liable to abuse under a democratic than a mixed form of government, it was by the establishment of a pure democracy only that, in Poland, the mass of the people, stupified by oppression, could be awakened to a just sense of their inherent rights, or inspired with the invincible resolution essential to the defence of them. From the tenor of the proclamation in question, persons of discernment augured the

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XX. speedy and melancholy termination of this unequal contest.

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A Prussian army, under general Elsner, marched to the attack of Cracow, which surrendered at discretion on the 15th of June. Nearly at the same time his Prussian majesty advanced towards the city of Warsaw, defended by Kosciusko in person with such skill and courage that the Prussians were compelled, after a blockade and siege of two months, to retreat with loss and disgrace to the frontiers of Silesia. The Russians, in the mean time, were gradually making progress on the side of Lithuania; and on the 18th of September, in a general engagement near Brzesc, defeated the insurgents, whom they obliged to retreat across the Bug. The invaders, now under the command of general Suwaroff, the bloody and barbarous conqueror of Ismail, marched forwards in full confidence of victory to Warsaw, designing in their way to form a junction with the detached corps of general Ferfen. With a view to prevent this project, Kosciusko, at the head of his brave Poles, on the 10th of October attacked Ferfen with undaunted intrepidity. The courage displayed by the Russians was not inferior, and they had the advantages of superior numbers and discipline. After a conflict of five hours the Poles were totally overpowered; and Kos-

ciusko himself, having received a dangerous ^{BOOK XX.} wound, was obliged to surrender. The fate of Poland was instantly decided. The generals Ferfen and Suwaroff, on effecting their proposed junction, proceeded to Warsaw, defended by Madalinski and other brave officers—a formidable line of batteries being opposed to the enemy. But the ferocious Suwaroff was not to be intimidated by any obstacles, and he immediately ordered his soldiers to mount to the assault in the same manner as at Ismail, using only the sabre and bayonet. After a severe contest of eight hours all resistance on the part of the Poles ceased, and the fight was converted into a massacre. But the most remarkable circumstance in the conduct of this horrid business is, that nearly ten hours after the Russians, apparently satiated with blood and slaughter, had rested upon their arms, the carnage and pillage of this devoted city commenced anew. The beautiful suburb of Praga was set on fire, and vast numbers not only of men, but of women and children, perished in the flames or by the sword. One of the remaining chiefs of the insurrection, count Potocki, was now deputed to general Suwaroff, to implore the mercy of that relentless barbarian, who received his application with extreme haughtiness, observing that a treaty was unnecessary—that the empress was

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not at war with the republic—and that his commission was merely to reduce the rebellious subjects of Poland to obedience. He, however, deigned at length to grant to the prayer of Potocki the lives and properties of the wretched remainder of the inhabitants. But even in this extreme exigency some high-minded patriots refused to take any part in this capitulation; among these was general Wawrzecki, governor of the city, whom Suwarrow nevertheless received with unexpected marks of civility, ordering his sword to be returned to him; but the haughty Pole would not accept the proffered boon, saying “That his sword was become useless, since he had no longer a country to defend.”

On the 9th of November, the Russian commander made his triumphal entry into Warsaw, traversing that dreadful scene of desolation and destruction in profound and terrific silence. Having made a solitude, he called it peace. That the impiety of this transaction might keep pace with the barbarity of it, a solemn *Te Deum* was celebrated on the 1st of December, for the success of the imperial arms of Russia, and the offerings of guilt were presented on altars polluted by profaneness, and red with human gore. The Polish chiefs, Kosciusko, Potocki, &c. were sent, under a strong military escort, to Peters-

burgh, and thrown into dungeons; and the unhappy monarch himself was ordered to repair first to Grodno, and then to Petersburg; where he soon ended his days, without exciting, after the high hopes on very slender grounds, conceived of him in the commencement of his reign, the slightest emotion either of esteem or regret *. A third and final partition of the unfortunate kingdom of Poland after a short interval took place, conformably to a new convention (signed at Petersburg, October 24, 1795), between the crowns of Russia and Prussia, to which Austria acceded; and the very name of Poland was from this time blotted out from the map of Europe †. Such were the exploits performed on the eastern side of Christendom by the high and very dear allies of England, jointly engaged with her in a confederacy which had for its professed

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Final partition of Poland.

* Stanislaus Poniatowski, late king of Poland and grand-duke of Lithuania, died at Petersburg, February 12, 1798.

† According to the terms of this convention, which were such as might have authorised the Prussian monarch to assume the title of king of Poland, the new allotment to Prussia extended along the Niemen, Grodno on the right bank remaining with Russia, to Niemirow on the Bug, to Sierok at the confluence of the Narew, thence to Swidig, then following the left bank of the Vistula to the mouth of the Plica, to Czanowice, and then drawing a straight line to the Vistula close to Cracovia.

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object the restoration of religion, of social order and regular government—exploits which infinitely exceeded in atrocity and barbarity any crimes which, surrounded as she was with enemies, and irritated by every species of provocation, had been in the very crisis of her revolution perpetrated by the atheists and anarchists of France.

The crowns of Sweden and Denmark still persevered in their wise determination of observing a perfect impartiality during the present war; and in the course of this year (March 27, 1794) a convention was concluded between them, by which they agreed to protect the freedom of commerce in the Baltic on the principles of the armed neutrality of 1780, equipping jointly a fleet of sixteen ships of the line, in equal proportions, for that service; and by the tenth article the Baltic is declared to be a neutral sea, absolutely and altogether inaccessible to the armed ships of the different and distant powers at war.

Political occurrences in America.

The prudence and circumspection of the American government could not prevent those remote states from being involved in the troubles which so violently agitated the European kingdoms. General Washington, president of the Union, in his speech to both houses of congress, December 3, 1793, urged upon them the neces-

sity of placing the country in a condition of complete self-defence. "The United States," said this truly great man, "ought not to indulge a persuasion that, contrary to the order of human events, they will for ever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms with which the history of every other nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult we must be able to repel it. If we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war."

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These expressions, though they bore relation also to England and Spain, were understood to be pointed chiefly against the government of France, whose ambassador, citizen Genet, a hot-headed zealot of Jacobinism, and one Duplaine received in the capacity of vice-consul of France, had conducted themselves with extreme disrespect and indecorum to the executive power; insomuch, that the president had thought it necessary to publish letters-patent, declaring, that he no longer recognised Duplaine as sustaining any official character. Upon which Genet wrote in a most insolent style to Mr. Jefferson, secretary of state, protesting

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1794. against the validity of this dismissal, and alleging that the constitution of the United States has not given the president the right which he assumed. "If," said this great diplomatic luminary, "it is an act merely arbitrary, it is among the class of acts of aggression, and becomes a cause of war. I do not recollect what the worm-eaten writings of Grotius, Puffendorf, or Vattel, say on the subject; I thank God I have forgotten what these hired jurisprudents have written upon the rights of nations at a period when all were enchained."

On the 5th of December the president sent a message to the two houses, containing a formal complaint of the behaviour of the French minister, but the same time acknowledging, in very explicit terms, the friendly attachment manifested by the French republic in the general tenor of its conduct towards America—"that they had given advantages to the commerce and navigation of the United States, and made overtures for placing those advantages on permanent ground; and he expressed his firm conviction that the government of France will not suffer them to remain long exposed to the insults of a person who has so little respected the mutual dispositions of the two nations." He takes notice, however, of the seizures of American vessels with enemy's goods on board, both by the French

and English, in violation of what he apprehended to be the true principles of neutrality; and that representations had been made to the belligerent powers to obtain redress for the past, and more effectual provisions against the future. Also, that on the subjects of mutual interest between America and Spain, negotiations and conferences were at that time depending.

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The outrages nevertheless committed by the British armed vessels and cruisers on the American traders, in consequence of the famous order of council dated November 1793, were so enormous, the encroachments made by the governments of Canada upon the American territory were so flagrant, and the indisposition of the court of London to deliver up the forts upon the great lakes, conformably to the treaty of 1783, was so openly manifested, that the president, in a message to congress, dated April 16, 1794, declared to the American legislature, that the aspect of their affairs with Great Britain was very serious; and he at the same time communicated to them the appointment of Mr. Jay, who held the high office of chief justice of the United States, as envoy extraordinary to his Britannic majesty. "A mission like this," said the president, "while it corresponds with the solemnity of the occasion, will announce to the

BOOK world a solicitude for a friendly adjustment of
XX. our complaints, and a reluctance to hostility."

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Several circumstances at this period concurred to excite the strongest suspicions in the minds of the Americans of evil designs on the part of the British court, which, with impotent malignity, resented the good understanding uniformly kept up by the republic of America with the republic of France notwithstanding the occasional abuses and excesses of the French government. In a TALK or conference held by lord Dorchester, late sir Guy Carleton, with the Indian chiefs of Lower Canada in February 1794, the governor declared, that he should not be surprised if the king their father were to be at war with the people of the United States before the end of the year.—“ You are witness, children, (said he, to the chieftains) that on our part we have acted in the most peaceable manner, and borne the language of the United States with patience; and, I believe, our patience is almost exhausted.” An insurrection having broken out in the western territory in consequence of the recent introduction of the excise laws among that rude people, the insurgents threatened, that if the tax in question was not repealed, they would place themselves under the protection of Great Britain. In the course of the summer they were, however,

reduced to submission. With a view as it appeared, to co-operate with these insurgents, the Indian nations to the northward made a desperate incursion into the western settlement. General Wayne, being sent with an armed force to repel this attack about the middle of August, penetrated to the Miami river, on the banks of which, to his extreme surprise, he discovered a fort erected and garrisoned by the British settlers of Detroit, and Canadian militia; and under the cannon of this fort the Indians routed and pursued by Wayne sought and found refuge. Major Campbell, governor of the fort, wrote to General Wayne to know the cause of his hostile approach to a garrison appertaining to his Britannic majesty. The American general, in reply, asserted, "that he knew of no act of hostility excepting that committed by the major in erecting a fortification within the acknowledged boundary of the United States, which he summoned him forthwith to surrender, and withdraw within the limits of the British territory." Major Campbell, with laudable discretion, informed general Wayne, "that being a military officer merely he had no authority to enter into any discussion of right, but that he was confident the difference would be amicably adjusted between their several governments;" and on this

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assurance general Wayne, with equal moderation, drew off his troops.

In the southern colonies also the American government had strong ground to suspect that the Creek and Seneca Indians had been tampered with by the British agents, to engage in a war against the Americans; but all these causes of difference were referred to the well-known address and management of Mr. Jay.

Mr. Monroe
nominated
ambassador
to France.

Nearly at the same time the president nominated, as minister plenipotentiary to the French government, Mr. James Monroe, a man of a cool and dispassionate temper, of excellent parts, and a sincere friend to the cause of Gallic as well as of American liberty. He arrived at Paris immediately after the fall of the Robespierian faction, and at his first audience (August 15, 1794) he was received with the most cordial tokens of esteem and affection. "The French people," said the president of the Convention, in his answer to the speech of Mr. Monroe, "have not forgotten, that it is to the Americans they owe the beginning of liberty. It was by admiring the sublime insurrection of the American people against Albion, once so proud, now so degraded,—it was by taking arms themselves to second the courageous efforts of that insurrection,—it was by cement-

His cordial
reception in
that country.

ing the independence of America with the blood of their bravest warriors, that the French people learned to break the sceptre of tyranny in their turn, and to erect the statue of Liberty on the ruins of a throne founded on fourteen centuries of corruption and crimes.”

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BOOK XXI.

Wonderful Acquisitions of France during the War. Session of Parliament, 1795. King's Speech holds out bold and fallacious Hopes of Success. Defection of Mr. Wilberforce, and other Partisans of the Ministry, from the System of the Court. Causes of the National Delusion. Suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act renewed. Loan granted to the Emperor. Statement of the National Finances. Motion of Mr. Grey respecting Peace—insidiously counteracted by Mr. Pitt. Similar Motion of the Duke of Bedford—rejected by the Peers. Resolutions moved by Mr. Grey and the Duke of Bedford also negatived. Motion by Mr. Fox to inquire into the State of the Nation—evaded. Motions respecting the Recall of Lord Fitzwilliam from Ireland---negatived. Pacific Motion by Mr. Wilberforce negatived. Marriage-Establishment of the Prince of Wales. Motion for the Abolition of the Slave-Trade rejected. Acquittal of Mr. Hastings. Termination of the Session. Proceedings of the Irish Parliament—Appointment of Earl Camden to the Government—Catholic-Emancipation Bill rejected—Distracted State of the Country. Military Transactions. Shattered Remains of the Duke of York's Army embarked for England. Peace between France and Tuscany—Also between France and Prussia, Hesse-Cassel, and Hanover. Treaty between France and Spain. Surrender of Luxemburg. Indecisive Operations on the Rhine. Naval Engagement off the Coast of Corsica. Skilful Retreat of Admiral Cornwallis. French Squadron defeated by Lord Bridport. The Islands of Eustatius and St. Lucia recovered by the French. War against the Maroons

in Jamaica. Cape of Good Hope captured by the English. State of Affairs in France. Revengeful Proceedings of the Gironde Faction. Disastrous Expedition to La Vendée. Death of the Dauphin. New Constitution of France. Dissolution of the Convention. Treaty of Commerce signed between Great Britain and America. Defensive Treaty between Great Britain and Russia. Session of Parliament held in Corsica. Petitions from the Cities of London, York, Norwich, &c. against the War. Disturbances in the City of Westminster. Pop-Gun Plot revived. Popular Meetings attended by vast Multitudes at Chalk-Farm, &c.

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Wonderful
acquisitions
of France
during the
war.

AT the conclusion of the year 1794, the French, after repelling with heroic courage the early attack of the allied powers upon their northern frontier, found themselves in possession of the whole of Flanders and Brabant. The Austrians were driven by them, with dreadful slaughter, across the Meuse, and the English and Dutch beyond the Waal; and they only waited for the setting-in of the frost to pass the great rivers into the territory of the United Provinces. On the side of Germany they had conquered the three ecclesiastical electorates of Mentz, Treves and Cologne; the principality of Liege; the duchies of Cleves, Juliers, and Deux-Ponts; the bishoprics of Spires and Worms; the far greater part of the dominions of the elector-palatine; and, in general, all the Hither Germany bounded by the Rhine. On the side of Italy they occupied the duchy of Savoy and a great

portion of Piedmont, the city and county of Nice, and the principality of Monaco. On that of Spain, the greater part of the frontier provinces of Biscay and Catalonia, with their ports, cities, magazines, arsenals, and founderies. The Spanish armies had been defeated in many bloody successive contests ; no military force could now be collected, in any degree competent to encounter the Republican troops in the field ; and the Catholic king, trembling upon his throne, seemed already to anticipate the horrors of an approaching revolution. The territories subdued by the arms of the republic were computed to contain thirteen millions of inhabitants : and in twenty-seven pitched battles, besides an innumerable multitude of inferior actions, they had slain 80,000 of their enemies, and taken more than 90,000 prisoners ; also immense quantities of ammunition and stores, with 3,800 pieces of cannon.

On the 30th of December, 1794, the parliament of Great Britain was convened, when the monarch, persevering resolutely in his purpose, thought fit to inform the two houses, “ that, notwithstanding the disappointments and reverses which the allied arms had experienced in the course of the last campaign, he retained a firm conviction of the necessity of persisting in a vigorous prosecution of the just and necessary

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Session of
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BOOK XXI. 1794. King's speech holds out bold and fallacious hopes of success.

war in which the nation was engaged."—By way of encouragement to his faithful parliament, nevertheless, his majesty was pleased to remark, "that, in considering the situation of their enemies, they would not fail to observe that the efforts which had led to their successes, and the unexampled means by which alone those efforts could have been supported, have produced among themselves the pernicious effects which were to be expected; and that every thing which had passed in the interior of the country had shown the progressive and rapid decay of their resources, and the instability of every part of that violent and unnatural system, which is equally ruinous to France and incompatible with the tranquillity of other nations."—His majesty farther declared, "that he should omit no opportunity of concerting the operations of the next campaign with such of the powers of Europe as were impressed with the same sense of the necessity of vigor and exertion. He mentioned his acceptance of the crown and sovereignty of Corsica; he announced to them the happy event of the marriage of his son, the prince of Wales, with the princess Caroline, daughter of the duke of Brunswic; and he concluded with expressing his *confident* hope, that, under the *protection* of PROVIDENCE, and with constancy and perseverance on our part, the principles of *social order*, of

morality and religion, would ultimately be successful; and that his *faithful people* would be rewarded for their present exertions and sacrifices by *the deliverance of Europe* from the greatest danger with which it had been threatened since the establishment of civilised society.”

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Addresses being brought forward, in the usual style of complaisance, an amendment was proposed in the house of peers by the earl of Guildford, who, at the close of a speech of excellent sense and sound reasoning, moved “that his majesty be requested and advised by that house to take the earliest means of securing a peace, and that no obstacle might arise from the nature of the French government. Holland (his lordship affirmed) could be saved only by a peace: and he urged the impracticability of attaining what appeared to be the present object of the war—the dictating of a government to France. In military operations, and in political negotiations, the ministry had equally failed; and, as he had never been satisfied of the wisdom of entering into the war, he could not now admit the necessity of persevering in it.”—The marquis of Lansdown declared, “that he could see no difficulty in treating with France at the present period, and adverted with contempt to the old and hacknied objection that there was no power existing there to treat with. When persons

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wanted to make up a quarrel, when there was a sincere desire for reconciliation on both sides, the means of effecting it would always be found. France, amidst all its change of parties, had not falsified its engagements, since the revolution, with any foreign state." The amendment was, after a spirited debate, rejected by a majority of 107 to 12 voices only.

Defection of
Mr. Wilber-
force, and
other parti-
sans of the
ministry,
from the
system of
the court.

The debate on the same subject, in the house of commons, excited still more of the public attention. No sooner was the address read, than Mr. Wilberforce, an intimate friend of the minister, and who had hitherto warmly supported him in all his measures, rose and objected to it, as pledging the house to prosecute the war till there should be a counter-revolution in France. He observed, "that there was nothing in his majesty's speech in the least pacificatory; although the Jacobin system, so hostile to this kingdom, was destroyed, and there appeared an assumption at least of moderation on the part of the new rulers of that country. The confederacy against France also was now dissolved, and her internal disorders were appeased. How then could we conquer a people who had resisted with such success, when assailed by the combined force of Europe from without, and when distracted with insurrections from within? The retrospect of our affairs was bad, but the prospect before us

was still worse. Like the waves of the ocean, the armies of France seem rapidly overthrowing every thing that stands in their way. Regardless of slighter differences, they look merely to the Convention, and thought themselves bound to adhere to what they perceived would alone keep the country together. This circumstance it was which had first staggered his opinion with relation to the probability of ultimate success in this contest. He was well aware of the impossibility of forcing a government upon France, when France was united in opinion and in act; and he scrupled not to add, that, though a friend to monarchy, he did not conceive a monarchy to be the fittest form of government for France, in present circumstances, as the current of prejudice set so strongly against it.—Mr. Wilberforce said, he did not think the country would be at all debased by a declaration for peace. True magnanimity consisted in acting with propriety under every circumstance, resolutely determining to change the mode of conduct whenever it is required by an alteration in the state of affairs. Those who thought it so easy to effect a counter-revolution in France should recollect that revolutionary principles had now been six years prevalent in that country, and that a new generation was rising up who had been educated in and familiarised to them. Equitable pro-

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posals for a negotiation would at all events be beneficial to this kingdom. If rejected, every person would unite with government in carrying on with vigor what would then be a just and necessary war." Mr. Wilberforce concluded a speech, candid from its acknowledgment of error, and impressive because it applied itself to the common sense and common feelings of his auditors, with moving an amendment to the address similar in purport to that of the earl of Guildford. In these sentiments he was supported very strongly by several most respectable independent members of the house, who had hitherto voted with administration. Mr. Bankes said, "the expectation of overturning the French republic was, in his opinion, absurd; and, if we were not to treat with France till the overthrow of that kind of government, the war might continue for ever."—Sir Richard Hill earnestly recommended peace; or, if that were unattainable, at least the withdrawment of our troops from the continent. The object of the continental war had been stated in one word—SECURITY. If it were asked what had we gained by that war, short as had been the period of its duration, it might be answered in one word—RUIN."

Mr. Pitt arose in visible emotion to vindicate the language and sentiments contained in the address. "His majesty's speech," Mr. Pitt

affirmed, "did not pledge the house never to make peace with the republican government of France, though he had no idea of *a secure peace* till the return of the monarchy*, which he thought the best form of government for all the nations of Europe. The change which had taken place in France was a change not in substance, but merely in name. Peace, could it be attained, would not place us in a situation of confidence. We must, on the contrary, increase our precautions. Hostilities would begin again in a short time, and as soon as France saw our military force diminished; and we should be again opposed to an enemy who might have found it as difficult to disband his armies as we should to obtain fresh forces. Even if disposed to peace, their rulers would be compelled by fear to give them new employment. If we dissolve the continental confederacy, we could not again hope to see it restored; we should then be exposed alone to the fury of France. Ought we to leave the AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS in possession of the

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* From the æra of the Revolution of 1688, in England, to the year 1783, being a period of 95 years, the two nations of Great Britain and France had been in a state of war no less than 40 of them. What therefore, it may be permitted to ask, according to Mr. Pitt's rules of political calculation, constituted that superior security for the continuance of peace under a monarchy rather than a republic?

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French? The safety of the Dutch depended upon our continuance of the war."

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Mr. Pitt traversed once more the old road of argument, declamation, and invective, with his accustomed power of language; but fearing, no doubt, that the efficacy of this political *charlatanisme* might be impaired by too frequent use, he took at the close of his speech, in a great measure, new ground; and ventured roundly to assert, that, notwithstanding the extensive conquests of France, she had suffered more in permanent value and present means than the losses of all the allies combined. The resources of the French, the means of their immense pecuniary expenditure, were requisition and arrest of property. Such a system could only be produced by despotism, and supported by terror. The expenditure of France had, he said, since the revolution, amounted to 320 millions. Was it then likely she should see this country first exhausted? This expenditure they had been enabled to bear only by the creation of unlimited paper credit. But all the debates of the Convention proved that they could not increase the emission of this paper without ruin. Mr. Pitt recapitulated the proceedings of the French, respecting finance, to shew that they could not maintain their assignats without contracting their expenses and diminishing their

forces. To press them now with vigor would compel them to issue more assignats, and thus rapidly exhaust their means and accelerate their ruin, which Mr. Pitt predicted to be imminent and inevitable;—and, in fact, they were already, as he affirmed, not only on the verge, but in the GULF OF BANKRUPTCY. The house divided at four o'clock in the morning, for the amendment 75, against it 246.

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Great as the influence of the crown may be supposed in the house of commons, it is impossible to attribute the vast and constant majorities of the minister, particularly since the commencement of the war with France, to the operation of that influence merely. Eloquence, that fatal talent when misapplied, will of itself produce mighty effects: and it must be remarked, that the eloquence of Mr. Pitt has ever been exerted in unison with the rooted prejudices of the house and of the nation. Hatred to France is a political chord, which vibrates to every touch; and when that master-passion is, by the force of imagination, connected with a reverence to religion, respect to morals, to social order, to regular government, and, in a word, to all the ties which unite the different classes of men in the bonds of civilisation and humanity, it must require a small portion of skill to direct the effects of it. The solicitude which transiently shewed

Causes of
the national
delusion.

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itself for the success of the French nation, in their efforts to establish a free constitution, was suddenly and totally absorbed in the horror excited by their subsequent enormities, without sufficiently considering the provocations which gave rise to them, or, attending to the equitable maxim, that a whole nation ought not to be execrated for the offences of comparatively a few individuals. What are usually styled the crimes of France are, in truth, for the most part, only her calamities; and they are no doubt as much the subject of abhorrence with the great mass of the people in that country as in this. Nevertheless so long as the passions of that high-spirited nation are inflamed and exasperated by opposition, so long will they be more or less chargeable with excesses moral and political—so long will they remain strangers to the blessings of liberty: liberty itself being the law of reason, of justice, and of humanity. And, “Of Law!” in this extensive sense, to use the sublime language of a justly admired writer, “no less can be said than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and in earth do her homage,—the very least as feeling her care, the greatest as not exempted from her power. Both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all, with uni-

form consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy *.”

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That the general intentions of the British nation, or even of the British legislature, in relation to France from the æra of the French revolution, have been upon the whole otherwise than just, is a supposition improbable and injurious. But when the power of eloquence, combined with the seductions of interest and the suggestions of prejudice, is calmly considered, it cannot be a subject of wonder that few minds are found of firmness sufficient to withstand the force of the association. As to the grand consideration on which Mr. Pitt now professed to rest his hopes of restoring monarchy in France, which was in this debate, for the first time, avowed to be, if not an absolute *sine-qua-non* of peace, one grand object of the war, it was evident that the minister, *if sincere*, had been grossly and disgracefully deceived by the fallacious reasonings of certain Frenchemigrants, ignorant or interested, who had published various tracts upon the subject of the French finances;—such as a certain M. D'Ivernois, created Sir Francis D'Ivernois, a dealer wholesale and retail in ridiculous paradoxes; and M. Mallet du Pan, an ingenious but enthusiastic writer;—neglecting the salutary but unpleasant

* HOOKER'S Ecclesiastical Polity, book 1, conclusion.

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warnings and admonitions of the celebrated M. de Calonne, formerly comptroller-general of the finances in France, who, in a most able pamphlet, entitled, *The Political State of Europe*, published at this time, expressly says--
“ I do repeat, and continually shall repeat, that whatever causes would reduce a regularly governed state to the last period of its military exertions, would by no means produce the same effects on a revolutionary government, possessing all the existing means and resources of the country. To reduce *them* to the last extremity, there must be no land, no productions, no labourers, no soldiers ; in short, no resources of any kind in the whole extent of the territory. To rely on the increase of the public misery in France, and to expect general tranquillity as the result of it, is as if nations had formerly thought themselves secure from the devastations of the Huns, Goths, and Vandals, because those hordes of barbarians had neither money nor credit, order nor discipline.”

Suspension
of the Ha-
beas-Corpus
Act renew-
ed.

On the 25th of January (1795) the attorney-general moved for a renewal of the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act, in direct opposition to the recorded verdicts of three successive juries that no treasonable conspiracy existed. This gave rise to a violent debate. Mr. Lambton, member for Durham, declared, that though a

confiding parliament had last session yielded credit to bare assertions, and suspended the Habeas-Corpus Act upon the strength of them, the persons accused of treason had been acquitted, not merely upon principles of law but of common sense. The evidence had totally failed on the part of the crown lawyers; and their own witnesses had disproved their case. He wished to know on what pretence ministers wanted a renewal of the bill, and demanded some information respecting these hidden conspiracies :

“ Quis ? Quid ? Ubi ? Quibus auxiliis ? Cur ? Quomodo ?
Quando ? ”

Mr. Hardinge, a court lawyer, on the other side strongly contended for the existence of a conspiracy, though no conspirators had yet been found whom the law had been able to reach. The late verdict of the juries would of itself encourage those who had embarked in those wicked counsels. He affirmed that it was no *common treason* that lay before them—it was not English but French treason, and proved by a mass of evidence, which, though it could not effect conviction in the courts of law, well warranted the passing of the Suspension Bill. Mr. Erskine remarked, that it was beyond his ability to comprehend how there could exist a conspiracy without conspirators. A conspiracy in the abstract might indeed be

BOOK supposed without known or detected conspirators; but the authors of this pretended plot
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 1795. had been known by government, and by the public at large, for two years, and been prosecuted without effect—and the verdicts of three juries completely negatived the conspiracy. But *kings' friends*, he feared, would never be quiet, till they had destroyed all kingly governments. Every loss of power and affection had uniformly arisen from their pernicious counsels.—On the division, at a very late hour, the numbers were 230 to 53; and the bill being transmitted to the lords, passed there also by a vast majority, but accompanied by a vigorous protest signed by the dukes of Norfolk and Bedford, and the earls of Lauderdale and Guildford.

Loan granted to the emperor.

On the 4th of February Mr. Pitt delivered to the house of commons a message from his majesty, intimating that a loan would be wanted to aid the exertions of the emperor during the next campaign, on the credit of his hereditary dominions, which would probably require the guarantee of the British government. In the subsequent discussion of this topic, Mr. Sheridan expressed a wish to obtain some positive security from his imperial majesty that those exertions should be made which were the conditions of the loan; and in order to awaken the sense of honor in the Austrian ministry, he thought it

might be of importance to come to some re-
solve, expressive of indignation and contempt, with respect to the flagrant violation of faith on the part of his Prussian majesty; and he then moved a resolution to that effect. Mr. Pitt allowed that the country had just cause of dissatisfaction in relation to the king of Prussia, but thought the motion inexpedient, and the house passed to the order of the day. Mr. Pitt then made a florid harangue, enumerating the many and great advantages England might expect to reap from so powerful a co-operation as the loan in question would enable the court of Vienna to maintain. An argument indeed had been adduced against this measure, which, if carried to its extent, would end in the annihilation of every system of alliance. But were we never to enter into a treaty with any monarch because one had broken his faith? It was the interest of the emperor to fulfil his engagements, and pride and honor called upon him to exert himself with effect. Comparing the sum, 4,600,000*l.* with the assistance required, it was purchasing that assistance very reasonably; and even if the whole weight of this burden fell upon us, it would not be wise or politic to suffer the defection of Austria from the confederacy. Mr. Pitt urged the advantageous terms of this loan, which, for every 300*l.* actually advanced, offered

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BOOK a debenture of 400*l.* upon the Bank of Vienna,
 XXI. *and the EMPEROR might be sued in HIS OWN*
 1795. COURTS!

Mr. Fox denied that it was the interest of the emperor to continue the war, and mentioned the wretched state of the imperial finances, and the utter inability of the emperor, as was notorious from the attempts already made on the English exchange, to raise this loan without the guarantee of England, by which we made the debt our own; and it was easy to foresee that every shilling advanced would be irrecoverably lost. He therefore objected to this mode of affording assistance, as much worse than that of a subsidy payable at stated periods, and over which we should necessarily retain some control. —But the address, as moved by Mr. Pitt, in answer to the royal message, passed by a very great majority.

In the upper house, lord Grenville took upon him to affirm, that of the real disposition of his imperial majesty in relation to this contract, no reasonable doubt could exist. His interest was deeply concerned in the fulfilment of his engagements, and the good faith of the house of Austria had never been impeached; so that the risque we ran by this loan amounted to little, and almost nothing. And in answer to the observation of the marquis of Lansdowne, that little depend-

ence could ever be placed on any German alliance, and that the exertions of the emperor had been useless and unavailing, his lordship exclaimed with ludicrous solemnity, "Was it nothing that the loss of Holland had been postponed from the year 1793 to the year 1795?" Such was the extraordinary nature of the consolations which this ill-fated war afforded!

On the 23d of February Mr. Pitt came forward with his annual statement of supplies, ways, and means. One hundred thousand seamen and a hundred and fifty thousand landmen, including militia, were voted for the service of the year. The loan proposed was eighteen millions, the largest ever voted by parliament, for which an equal capital in the three-per-cents. and six millions in the four-per-cents. were created, and about one-half per cent. long annuity: and sixteen hundred thousand pounds in new taxes of various kinds were proposed; all of which passed with trifling opposition; and the whole expence of the war, which had as yet lasted two years only, was moderately computed, including the unfunded debt, at fifty millions; *i. e.* as much as the aggregate expenditure of the ten-years' glorious war of queen Anne, in the course of which the Low Countries were conquered for the House of Austria, the empire was saved, and France itself attacked and invaded

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Statement
of the na-
tional fi-
nances.

BOOK on every side. But now how great the contrast !
 XXI. The Low Countries for ever lost,—Holland in-
 1795. vaded, and neither disposed nor able to resist,—
 an English army, commanded by a prince of the
 blood, flying before the French, and driven to
 take refuge on board their ships,—Spain, Italy,
 and Germany, successfully attacked by the arms
 of France,—and Prussia, after receiving immense
 sums from England, abandoning the confederacy
 she herself had first suggested and formed, in
 violation of her most solemn engagements:—
 and, what was infinitely the worst of all, a par-
 liament not possessing a spark of the old Eng-
 lish spirit, sunk into a state of political stupefac-
 tion, obstinately and implicitly confiding in a
 minister whose visionary plans and projects had
 been every-where defeated, and whose predic-
 tions had been uniformly falsified.

Various efforts were made, very early in the
 present session, to induce parliament to come to
 some general resolution which might render it
 necessary for the executive government to set
 on foot a negotiation for peace. On the 26th
 of January Mr. Grey moved, “That it is the
 opinion of this house that the existence of the
 present government of France ought not to be
 considered as precluding at this time a negotia-
 tion of peace.” This resolution, Mr. Grey
 shewed, “was highly requisite, in order to prove

Motion of
 Mr. Grey
 respecting
 peace :

to the French nation that the war was not re-
garded by the legislature as a war *usque ad in-*
ternecionem, however it might be represented by
individuals; and averred that it was not his in-
tention to propose any thing incompatible with
any former vote, address, or resolution, of the
house." This motion was so seasonable and
popular, and the impression made by the late
speech of Mr. Wilberforce such, that Mr. Pitt
could not venture to put a direct negative upon
it; he therefore evaded the proposition by mov-
ing the following insidious amendment:—"That,
under the present circumstances, this house feels
itself called upon to declare its determination
firmly and steadily to support his majesty in the
vigorous prosecution of the present just and ne-
cessary war, as affording at this time the only
reasonable expectation of permanent security and
peace to this country; and that, for the attain-
ment of these objects, this house relies with equal
confidence on his majesty's intention to employ
vigorously the force and resources of the country
in support of its essential interests, and on the
desire uniformly manifested by his majesty to
effect a pacification on just and honorable
grounds with any government in France, under
whatever form, which shall appear capable of
maintaining the accustomed relations of peace
and amity with other countries." Mr. Pitt de-

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Insidiously
counteract-
ed by Mr.
Pitt.

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clared this amendment to be consonant to the terms of his majesty's former declarations; and he contended that every nation at war was justified in refusing to treat for peace with a government that could not give security. He was therefore not ready to treat with the present government of France; and he took upon him to affirm, that, since the commencement of the present war, there existed not in that country a government capable of maintaining with other nations the accustomed relations of peace and amity—*not recollecting*, doubtless, that France had actually maintained, during the whole period of the war, those relations with Denmark, Sweden, and America. The commerce and agriculture of France were represented by Mr. Pitt as in a most disastrous situation—their financial resources as in a state of rapid decay—justice almost unknown—and, with respect to religion, he asked, would the house willingly treat with a nation of atheists?—The revolutionary system was not essentially varied since the late changes: he would not, however, say that it might not improve, but that time had not arrived: when it did, if they gave to their government that stability and authority which afforded grounds of moral probability that we might treat for peace with security, then we might negotiate; but we ought in prudence to

wait the return of such circumstances as would afford us a probability of treating with success. BOOK
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Mr. Wilberforce remarked " that on one point the house appeared perfectly agreed—the propriety of declaring the republican form of government no bar to negotiation. He thought the terms of the amendment not sufficiently explicit: it proposed relying on the dispositions always manifested by his majesty of effecting a pacification, whereas it did not appear to be fact that his majesty had always made a clear manifestation of such a disposition. The declaration of our allies gave the French reason to believe that the restoration of the ancient government was in contemplation. For his part, favorable as he was to the system of a counter-revolution, yet he was free to own that in his opinion any government would be preferable to the old one. In our present situation we had only a choice of evils; and such a peace as could be made with the present government of France was a less evil than continuing the war on the principles by which it had hitherto been directed, and far better than such a peace as we might ultimately be obliged to accept. There were (he said) various modes by which nations placed in the relation of England and France might treat without humiliation on either side. England (he observed, upon the authority of Mr.

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Hume) had too great a propensity to war, and was too pertinacious in continuing it. Professing to think the original motion not sufficiently general, he concluded with moving an amendment upon that of Mr. Pitt, viz. ‘that the existence of *any* particular form of government in France ought not to preclude such a peace as should be consistent with the honor and interests of the country.’ ”

Mr. Fox appealed to the house “Whether it was to be expected that the French would be the first to negotiate after the declarations made against them by ministers. What (he asked) would have been the feelings of Englishmen if the Convention had determined never to treat with them till there was a reform in the English government?—We must (said this great statesman) do away all our arrogant expressions against France; and then, even though we should not be able to obtain peace, yet we should take from them the cause of their enthusiasm, that which roused every national feeling, and had carried them to unparalleled exertions.—In all questions of policy, he said, nations must yield to imperious necessity; and it would be obstinacy, not honor, to persevere in an opinion proved by experience to be wrong.” The original motion of Mr. Grey was at length negatived, and the amendment of Mr. Pitt adopted, the num-

bers being 268 to 86. The question was then BOOK
XXI. put, upon the amendment of Mr. Wilberforce, 1795. when the house again divided: Ayes, 90, Noes, 254; so that the opposition seemed gradually though slowly gaining ground.

A similar motion was brought forward in the house of peers by the duke of Bedford, on the following day, seconded by the duke of Norfolk, which was superseded by an amendment copied from that of Mr. Pitt by lord Grenville, who declared his belief that a majority of the French were favorers of royalty, and that the re-establishment of monarchy presented the most probable hopes of peace.—The amendment was opposed in a speech of great energy and eloquence by the celebrated Watson, bishop of Landaff. This prelate said, “ that he could not, without clearer proof than had yet appeared, admit the original justice of the war, nor, of consequence, the necessity of it; for no war could be necessary that was not just. There had been a time when Great Britain could have mediated with efficacy between France and the Germanic powers, and might have insisted upon each party confining itself within its ancient bounds, at the same time renouncing every claim to interfere in their internal affairs. His lordship shewed the absurdity of continuing the war in order to

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1795. stop the progress of democratic opinions, and added, that the governments of Europe would find their truest safety in exercising their power with equity and moderation. The British constitution admitted of improvement, and admitted it not only with safety but facility. He urged the importance of immediate negotiation, in order to promote union at home. To persist in the same course, under every alteration of circumstances, was not firmness, but obstinacy. It was a mistaken notion of firmness that lost us America. With regard to the atrocities committed by the French, whatever might be their number or magnitude, who made us the avengers of guilt, or invested us with a right to dispense the judgments of Providence? To God, not to us, they were accountable, and to him alone did justice and judgment belong. The French, we are told, are atheists, and this is urged as a reason for persisting in the war against France. Presumptuous idea! Miserable beings as we are, did we imagine that the arm of flesh was wanted to assist and enforce the will of the ALMIGHTY? The abuse of religion had been mistaken in France for religion itself. Hence, in the eagerness of her enthusiasm for the reform of religious abuses, she had renounced religion altogether, and been betrayed by the false light of philosophy into infidelity.

But he doubted not that the mist in which they were at present bewildered would soon be dispersed, and Christianity appear in a purer form than ever."—The division upon the motion of amendment was 88 to 15 peers.

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Not discouraged by the ill success of his former motion, and desirous to improve whatever impression had been made by it, Mr. Grey, on the 6th of February, moved the following well-weighed and judicious resolution :—" That this house, considering that, in the support which it has given to his majesty in the prosecution of the present war, it has at no time had any other object but to restore to these kingdoms the blessings of an equitable peace ; that with a view to accomplish this humane and desirable end, every formal difficulty which may stand in the way of a pacific negotiation with the powers with which we are at war ought, in the first instance, to be removed ; and that without some acknowledgment of the existence of a competent power in France with which his majesty may negotiate and conclude a treaty of peace on just and reasonable terms for both parties, there can be no termination of the present war but in the destruction of one of them ; —considering further, that the existence of such a competent power in France has been directly

Resolutions
moved by
Mr. Grey—
negated.

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acknowledged by several of the powers in Europe, as well as by the United States of America, with all of whom, during the present war, France has maintained the accustomed relations of peace and amity ;—and considering also that the existence of such a competent power in France has been, in various instances, virtually admitted even by the belligerent powers themselves, some of whom have entered into public resolutions to make overtures for peace,—is of opinion that the government now existing in France is competent to entertain and conclude a negotiation for peace with Great Britain.”—After an animated debate, the previous question, moved by Mr. Dundas, was carried by 190 to 60 voices.

In the house of peers, on the 12th of February, the duke of Bedford made a nearly similar motion, which was opposed, and the previous question moved, by Lord Hawkesbury—the numbers being 101 to 15 ; but against this virtual rejection of the original motion the duke of Bedford, and the earls of Lauderdale, Buckinghamshire, and Guildford, entered a strong protest.

The harsh and haughty language of the king's speech, at the commencement of the session, had given general disgust ; and Mr. Pitt had been forced to a concession, which was probably

Similar motion by the duke of Bedford—rejected.

not within the scope of his original intention. BOOK
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 The nation, at this period of the contest, seemed 1795.
 wearied and dispirited; the gay and flattering
 hopes which Mr. Pitt had taught them to in-
 dulge had vanished into air, and they were not
 yet roused to higher exertion by the sense of
 danger and self-preservation. Taking advant-
 age of this state of the public mind, and of the
 recent defection of Mr. Wilberforce and his
 party from the court, Mr. Fox, in a most able
 and luminous speech, moved, on the 24th of
 March, "That the house of commons should
 resolve itself into a committee, to inquire into
 the state of the nation." This solemn mode of
 inquiry ought not (he observed) ever to be re-
 sorted to but in cases of peculiar emergency,
 and such he esteemed the present. He had
 himself introduced a similar motion, in 1777,
 after the surrender at Saratoga: but the perils
 to the country then were trifling and insignifi-
 cant compared with what they were at present.
 If, when the public mind was evidently changed,
 the house should continue to repose a blind
 confidence in ministers, to impose new burdens
 on the people, not only without requiring them
 to negotiate, but even without demanding of
 them any account of the blood and treasure
 they had squandered, great advantage must be

Motion by
 Mr. Fox to
 inquire into
 the state of
 the nation
 —evaded.

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given to whoever wished to disseminate dissatisfaction. In justification of his motion, nothing more, he thought, was necessary, than to state to the house, that, after a war of two years, we had been uniformly unsuccessful, had relinquished the object for which the war was said to be undertaken, while the enemy had gained more than the wildest imaginations ever ascribed either to their ambition or their principles. An inquiry must, in one view, be favorable even to ministers themselves. If we had, as ministers asserted, entered into the war from necessity, and had conducted it, as they also asserted, with wisdom and vigor, the result would be absolute despair. But perhaps they did not do their cause justice. Perhaps the cause of failure might inhere in the theoretic principle; and their practical measures, founded upon that erroneous principle, might be judicious and proper. Perhaps, on the other hand, their theory was sound and just, but their mode of carrying it into execution, their practical measures, might be found unwise and indigested. In either case the public would receive some satisfaction; and they would, upon inquiry, either change the principle or censure the conduct; and ministers would be relieved from one part at least of the two-fold imputation, which, pre-

vious to any inquiry, must hang over their heads.

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Great Britain, Mr. Fox said, had a right to demand an inquiry into the conduct of the king of Prussia. Was he an ally? Was he neutral? Was he an enemy? That monarch had alleged that he could do nothing without a subsidy: we had given him 1,200,000*l.* and the use he had made of it was to attack Poland. The emperor was equally unable to move without the aid of a loan; and England must, it was manifest, sustain the whole weight of the war. Great subsidies were also paid to the Italian princes, though we scarcely heard of a movement in that country. Spain had lost Navarre, Biscay, and Catalonia, and must also be subsidized, or soon make peace with the enemy. All this called for inquiry. What was our conduct to the neutral powers---to America---whom we had first shamefully injured, then servilely courted? To the court of Denmark, whose wise policy reflected such high honor on her chief minister, the count de Bernstorff? To Tuscany? To Switzerland? To Genoa? We had bullied the grand duke into a declaration of war against France: though we had recently submitted to his concluding a treaty not of neutrality merely but of peace and amity with

BOOK the French convention. Lord Robert Fitzge
 XXI. rald tells the Swiss Cantons "that in a war which
 1795. threatens the existence of every established government, even neutrality will not authorize any correspondence directly or indirectly with the *faction*s or their agents." To the Genoese it had been said, "If you continue in your neutrality it must be offensive to the combined powers; and may give reason to revive claims which will lead to disagreeable consequences." Ministers have impaired the character of Great Britain for justice and magnanimity: the little republic of Genoa is menaced by the mighty power of Britain.

Mr. Fox again insisted, in the strongest terms, upon the propriety and necessity of a specific avowal of the object of the war. Is it merely to repel certain acts of aggression, without adverting to any particular form of government in France? Then say distinctly what are those aggressions, and what the reparation you require.—Is it to wrest the Low Countries from the enemy, and to confine France to her ancient limits? Avow it to be so, without disguise.—Is it to restore the ancient monarchy, or any form of monarchy in France? Declare in this, and in every case, your object, openly and fairly, and you will not fail to secure many adherents and

partizans. But ministers had so shuffled and trimmed between different systems, they had dealt out their declarations and professions in such ambiguous language, that they had lost all claim and title to confidence ; and, through the puerile hope of embracing the incompatible advantages of these opposite plans, they had forfeited every benefit to be derived from the decided adoption of any one of them.

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What could the great body of the emigrants suppose when they saw Valenciennes and Condé taken possession of in the name, not of Louis XVII. but of the emperor ; and the French West-India islands in that of the king of England ? Unquestionably, that we were fighting merely for the spoils of France.

Even at sea, where our fleets were triumphant, Mr. Fox remarked that, in the second year after France took part in the American war, the number of captures was 499. In the second year of this war the number was 860. All this demanded enquiry.

He then adverted to the condition of Ireland, the irritated state of which was to be ascribed, according to every appearance, to the misconduct of ministers. If the house refused to make any enquiry into these things, they would make themselves responsible for all the calamities which might and probably would ensue.

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The policy of ministers in relation to Ireland had been marked with the same ambiguity and inconsistency as their conduct towards France. He thought highly of the eloquence, and even of the talents, of the present minister, as exerted in a particular line ; but he was a minister of art and plausibility merely, not of discernment, not of candor, not of generosity—‘ in rebus politicis, nihil simplex, nihil apertum, nihil honestum.’

Mr. Pitt, in reply, asked whether, at a period so arduous and important, and so late in the session, it could be deemed expedient to commence so extensive an investigation ? Every topic in the speech just delivered had been fully discussed and decided upon : such a committee as that required was, therefore, as unnecessary as improper ; it could answer no possible good purpose at the present moment : whenever *a proper period* arrived for investigating the conduct of the executive government, it would be found marked by moderation and forbearance. He positively disavowed the proposition that a nation, on entering into a war, was bound to state all its objects, and thus preclude itself from taking advantage of fortuitous circumstances as they might arise. Mr. Pitt concluded with moving the question of adjournment, which after a debate of many hours, was carried

by a majority of 219 to 63 voices. Upon this occasion, as on various others, it was remarked that a great proportion of the members present left the house without voting.

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Lord Fitzwilliam, having now returned from Ireland, after a government of three months' duration only, appeared on the 24th of April, in the house of peers, and in a manly and spirited manner challenged ministers to a full investigation of the causes of his removal. He said they had insinuated blame to him, and the gauntlet they had thus thrown down he willingly took up. A profound silence ensuing on the other side of the house, the duke of Norfolk gave notice of a motion to address the king, that those parts of the correspondence between lord Fitzwilliam and the ministry which related to his lordship's recall from his government should be forthwith laid before them. This was debated in a very full house on the 8th of May, the motion being supported, exclusive of those lords who usually voted in opposition, by the duke of Leeds, the earl of Moira, and lord Fitzwilliam himself, who positively avowed that he went out expressly authorized to complete the measure of Catholic emancipation, and that no objections had been made to the steps he had adopted for that purpose until he had proceeded to the dismissal of certain persons in office ini-

Motions respecting the recall of lord Fitzwilliam from Ireland—negatived.

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mical to that measure, and had taken other gentlemen, obnoxious to ministers here, into his favor and confidence.—Lord Grenville declined entering into a formal discussion of the subject, being prevented, as he alleged, by *reasons of state* which he could not properly explain. The motion called upon ministers to violate the secrecy of the cabinet and the sanctity of their oath. But he asked in what respect the situation of a lord-lieutenant differed from that of any other minister of the crown, who might be removed at pleasure? and affirmed that the noble earl complained with an ill grace of being himself removed from office after he had exercised his authority in the removal of so many others. His lordship said he had seen the removal of many lord-lieutenants without a single complaint to parliament on the subject; and to adopt a new course would be to change the constitution, and to convert that house of parliament into a committee of public safety.—After a long and vigorous debate the house divided: contents, 25; non-contents, 100.

A similar motion made by Mr. Jekyl in the house of commons, and seconded by Mr. Fox in a speech of great political comprehension and sagacity, was negatived by 188 to 49 voices.

Pacific motion by Mr.

The last effort of the session to rescue the nation from the calamities of an unjust and un-

necessary war was made by Mr. Wilberforce on the 27th of May. He began by stating the general expectation of pacification, and the satisfaction which had arisen from it. Though he did not profess to go the length of *Vox populi vox Dei*, he thought the universal wish and desire of the people should only be superseded by extraordinary circumstances. It was an important duty, in every war, to look out continually for every opening which might lead to a conclusion of it, to see whether the original motives still subsisted, and whether it was needful to pursue the path we were treading. From a full review of the state of our allies he was of opinion that very slender assistance was to be expected from any of them; and the aspect of affairs in France afforded little encouragement obstinately to prosecute the war against her. The insurrections in that country were quelled; she had made her peace with Russia and Tuscany; she had subdued Holland; and, notwithstanding the depreciation of her paper money, it did not appear that the operations of the French government were any-wise impeded; nor could he see when the entire ruin of the French finances, so much talked of and so often foretold, was to take place. Her armies exhibited no symptoms of discontent, nor her rulers of apprehension. The situation of Ireland, Mr. Wilberforce said, was truly

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--negatived.

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critical, and the continuance of the war was much more likely to diffuse French principles there, than the termination of it. As to the safety of Europe, did it belong to England to fight her battles almost without assistance? Europe was able to take care of herself, and several of the confederate powers had already signed treaties with the French government; and the emperor himself in his rescript to the diet, had very recently notified his willingness to enter into negotiation with France. The motion he meant to propose merely prepared the way for treating, and, in words less strong than those used in the Imperial rescript, declared, "That it is the opinion of the house that the present circumstances of France ought not to preclude the British government from entertaining proposals for a general pacification; and that it is for the interest of Great Britain to make peace with France, if it can be fairly and honorably effected." *

The motion was opposed by Mr. Windham, who avowed his opinion that peace, at the pre-

* The Imperial rescript alluded to by Mr. Wilberforce bore date the 4th of May, (1795). In it "the ministers of his imperial majesty are charged to declare in the name of his majesty the emperor and king, to the envoys representing the several princes and states of the holy Roman empire, that his majesty is ready to enter into negotiations with the French Republic.

sent moment, was neither safe nor honorable. BOOK
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 It was evident that the exertions of the revolutionary government had relaxed, that its fortune had reached its height, and that it exhibited unequivocal symptoms of decay. Nothing but such motions as the present could prevent a speedy termination of the contest, and he contended that all France was rapidly adopting the sentiments of La Vendée. The motion was calculated to remove ministers from their situations, while the prospect of ultimate success from a continuance of the war was infinitely more flattering than ever; it tended to promote disaffection at home, to strengthen the enemy;—He said that the cry of peace proceeded from the Jacobin faction in this country, and that the same sentiment was characteristic of the same party all over Europe; and he concluded with moving the order of the day.—Mr. Fox made an admirable speech in support of the original motion. He remarked, that it had been frequently and pompously asserted that we were carrying on a war not for any particular interests of our own, but on principles of general beneficence and justice, for the purpose of rescuing Europe

His imperial majesty, without being too mindful of his own interest, will consult therein the real welfare of the empire, and make it his sole care to procure to the empire an acceptable, solid, and permanent peace.”

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from destruction and ruin. There might be chivalry in succouring those who implored our succour, but the chivalry of succouring those who did not want it, was madness. Who called upon us to continue the war? The allies were inclined to peace;—neutral powers wished for the restoration of peace. France was disposed to peace, and Great Britain alone was shaking the torch of discord.”

Mr. Pitt deplored the difference of sentiment which prevailed between him and his honorable friend, the mover of the resolution, on this subject; but was happy to think there was no other point on which they had ever disagreed. He contended that the words of the resolution involved in them a fallacy, as if there were those who did not wish for a safe and honorable peace, when the real question was, whether there existed any regular government with whom to treat? Mr. Pitt corroborated the assertions of Mr. Windham,^o and affirmed, that, from the distractions which prevailed in France, and the discontents of the people, a new order of things might be expected to arise, more favorable to the success of the war than had hitherto appeared. The exertions of that country were, he said, manifestly on the decline: the depressed state of the assignats, and their incredible expenditure, proved them in a state which might well be styled bankruptcy.—The motion

of Mr. Wilberforce was superseded by the order of the day, on a division of 211 to 88 voices: so that the opposition had evidently gained considerable ground during the session, and the genuine sense of the house was now sufficiently apparent.—A similar motion by the earl of Lauderdale, in the upper house, was negatived by a great and overwhelming majority.

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In the course of the preceding winter a treaty of marriage had been negotiated between the prince of Wales and the princess Caroline, daughter to the duke of Brunswic. Early in the month of April the princess arrived in England, when the nuptials were celebrated with extraordinary magnificence. It was, however, well understood that the prince acceded to this alliance with much reluctance—his attachment to the well-known object of his choice, Mrs. Fitzherbert, with whom the marriage ceremony, though invalid by law, was universally believed to have long since taken place, having suffered no diminution. He was induced to this fatal compliance, as there is good reason to suppose, by two considerations; first, the pressing instances of the king to dissolve his connection with the lady who had so long been in possession no less of his esteem than his affection; and, secondly, the promise positively made to him of an immediate and ample provision for the

Marriage establishment
of the prince
of Wales.

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discharge of his debts, now increased to a vast amount.

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In consequence of a message from the king, delivered by Mr. Pitt, stating the reliance of his majesty upon the generosity of the house to enable him to settle an establishment upon the prince of Wales suited to his rank and dignity, and to relieve him from his present incumbrances, the house went, May 4, into a committee on this subject. Mr. Pitt, in the committee, declared that it was not his majesty's intention to require a specific sum for the discharge of the debts of his royal highness, but to set apart a certain portion of that income which might be granted by the liberality of parliament, to their gradual liquidation. The extent of the debts was stated by Mr. Pitt at between six and seven hundred thousand pounds, no part of which, he said, could possibly be defrayed out of the civil list. He observed that the present income of the prince was 60,000*l.* per annum, exclusive of the duchy of Cornwall, which he estimated at 13,000*l.*; that the late prince of Wales, father of the reigning monarch, and the late king George II. when prince, possessed a net income of 100,000*l.* without that duchy, at a time when money was of much more value than at present. He therefore proposed that the revenue of his royal highness should be 125,000*l.* exclusive of

the duchy; that the jointure of the princess should be 50,000*l.* per annum; and that the proportion of the prince's income appropriated for the payment of his debts should be vested in the hands of commissioners. And in order that effectual provision might be made to prevent the recurrence of any such claim in future, he recommended that no arrear should, on any pretence, go beyond the quarter; that debts not then claimed should wholly lapse; and that all suits for the recovery of debts from his royal highness should lie against his officers.

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These several regulations, though very necessary and proper, being deemed by some admirers of *étiquette* incompatible with the rank and dignity of the great personage concerned—much more so, doubtless, in their estimation, than the contracting of debts—he was unable to pay—the prince, with his characteristic generosity, and an implicit avowal of his former indiscretion, sent, on the first of June, a message to the house by his attorney-general, Mr. Anstruther, stating, “That he was desirous to acquiesce in whatever might be the sentiments of the house, both with respect to his future expenditure, and the appropriation of any part of the income they might grant him for the discharge of his debts: his wish was entirely to consult the wisdom of parliament: He was perfectly disposed to ac-

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quiesce in any abatement of splendor they might judge necessary, and desired to have nothing but what the country might be cordially disposed to think he ought to have. In fine, whatever measures were taken by parliament would meet with his hearty concurrence."—The prince of Wales had now passed the season of youth, the errors incident to which, it might reasonably be hoped, he had by this time seen and relinquished. He possessed an excellent natural understanding, liberal sentiments, engaging manners, with many amiable and estimable qualities. In alleviation of the imprudence he had shewn, and of the severe censure he had too justly incurred by contracting a second time, in the space of eight years, so vast a debt, could only be alleged the extreme inadequacy of his income to his station in life. From the aggregate amount of the debt, ought, however, in reason and equity, to be deducted the proceeds of the revenue of Cornwall during his minority, amounting, according to the accounts laid before parliament, to the sum of 233,000*l.* and which, under the guardianship of the Court of Chancery, it was remarked, would have produced 350,000*l.* This the king had received, as if it were a branch of the civil list, for twenty-two years, under the poor pretence of defraying the expence of the prince's education. And if

this deduction be admitted, the general expenditure of the prince will not be found, on the average, from the period of his attaining the age of majority to the present time, much to exceed the reasonable allowance of 100,000*l.* per annum.

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It appeared, in the course of this investigation, to the honor of the prince, that he had actually some time since come to a resolution not to apply again to parliament, to retire from public life, and apply the greater part of his income to the payment of his debts, agreeable to the advice of lord Thurlow and others ; but that from this laudable design he was vehemently dissuaded by lord Loughborough, who, speaking without doubt from direction, pretended that the advice in question savored too much of that given to M. Egalité, and he could guess from what quarter it came. The plan was therefore relinquished. It was at length determined, that the annual sum of 78,000*l.* should be appropriated to the discharge of the debts, which, it was calculated, would completely liquidate them in the space of nine years ! In the mean time the prince, as the penalty of his indiscretion, was satisfied to live in a comparatively private manner upon the remaining 60,000*l.* ; and a bill, containing the provisions above mentioned, in a few

BOOK weeks passed, with pretty general concurrence,
 XXI. through both houses.

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Motion for
 the abolition
 of the slave-
 trade reject-
 ed.

In the course of the session Mr. Wilberforce renewed his motion for the immediate abolition of the infamous slave-trade, and was ably supported by Mr. Whitbread, Mr. William Smith, and Mr. Pitt: but the house had now grown cold and callous to all reasoning upon this subject; and, on the proposition of Mr. Barham, supported by Mr. Dundas, who still professed himself friendly to the object, but adverse to the time, the consideration of the question was adjourned for six months.

Late in the session Mr. Dundas made a very favorable report of the state of the East-India Company's affairs and finances, which he asserted to be better by the sum of 1,412,249*l.* than at the last annual statement, and this the house confirmed by the sanction of their vote.

Acquittal of
 Mr. Hastings.

The long-depending cause of Mr. Hastings, which began February 12th, 1788, terminated during the present session. The charges against him had been comprised under four heads: 1. The Rajah Cheyt Sing. 2. The Begums of Oude. 3. Presents. 4. Contracts. The report of the committee of peers was received on the 2d of April, and on the 23d the articles of accusation were submitted to the decision of the

house of lords. Out of about three hundred BOOK
peers and prelates, twenty-nine only deemed XXI.
themselves competent to vote on the questions 1795.
before the court; and of these, eight, viz. the
lord chancellor, the duke of Norfolk, the earls of
Carnarvon, Radnor, Fitzwilliam, Suffolk, and
Mansfield, and lord Walsingham, gave a verdict
of guilty upon one or other of the charges pre-
ferred against him: so that the acquittal could
by no means be considered either as unanimous
or honorable. The truth is, that from the ex-
traordinary length of this trial, the complexity
of the evidence, and the multiplicity of the do-
cuments to be consulted,—and, above all, from
the obscurity in which the merits of the cause
were involved by having been made for so many
years the perpetual theme of eloquence,—it was
very difficult, without bestowing a larger share
of attention, or possessing an higher portion of
discrimination than falls to the lot of the gene-
rality of persons, to determine, without hesitation,
upon the political character and conduct of the
accused. Had the evidence been condensed
into a moderate compass, and divested of the
pomp of declamation and the violence of in-
vective, it would have struck the public mind
much more forcibly, and Mr. Hastings would
scarcely have escaped the censure and punish-
ment due to a state-delinquent. Or if the peers

BOOK had ultimately returned a verdict of Not Guilty,
 XXI. the house of commons would have stood just-
 1795. ified in the view of the world at large, and
 the political reputation of Mr. Hastings have
 sustained irreparable injury. Upon the whole
 it must be acknowledged, that this famous trial,
 which had attracted, by its importance and dura-
 tion, the attention both of Europe and Asia,
 was, after all, brought to a “most lame and im-
 potent conclusion.” The speaker of the house
 of commons, nevertheless, in giving the thanks
 of the house to the managers of the impeach-
 ment, in his official capacity, had the complais-
 ance to say, that their exertions in this cause had
 conferred honor not on themselves only, but on
 the house under whose authority they had acted ;
 and he referred with dignity and propriety to
 the increased security which the constitution
 had derived in the course of the proceedings on
 this trial, from the recognition and full confirma-
 tion of the principle, that an impeachment is
 not discontinued by a dissolution of parliament.

Termination
 of the ses-
 sion.

The session terminated on the 27th of June,
 1795. The speech from the throne, on this oc-
 casion, seemed to breathe much more the air of
 pacification than at its commencement ; and
 his majesty was graciously pleased to declare it
 to be impossible to contemplate the internal
 situation of the enemy, with whom we were

contending, without indulging a hope that the present circumstances of France might, in their effects, hasten the return of such a state of order and regular government as may be capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of amity and peace with other powers.

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The proceedings of the Irish parliament during this session were scarcely less interesting than those of the British legislature. In the coalition which actually took place in the course of the preceding summer, and which had been more than two years in contemplation, between the existing administration and the Portland party, it was understood that the department of Ireland was to be entrusted altogether to the latter: and earl Fitzwilliam accepted the high and arduous office of lord-lieutenant of that kingdom, with the avowed purpose of admitting and establishing the claim of Catholic emancipation in its full extent. That nobleman, distinguished by the beneficence of his disposition and rectitude of his intentions, though partially led astray by the infuriate eloquence of Burke, himself informs us *, "that when the negotiation between the two political parties was pending, if the general management and superintendence of Ireland had not been

Proceedings
of the Irish
parliament.

* Vide "Letters to the Earl of Carlisle."

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offered by Mr. Pitt, *that* coalition could never have taken place: it was offered from the beginning of the negotiation:" and his lordship appeals to the duke of Portland, "whether the office was not offered entire? and whether he was forewarned by Mr. Pitt, that it was to be divested of half its duties, half its importance, and all its character?" Previously to lord Fitzwilliam's acceptance of the vice-royalty, "he had not only satisfied himself (as he tells us) that the Catholics ought to be relieved from every remaining disqualification, but he knew that the duke of Portland perfectly concurred with him in that opinion. And when the question came under discussion, previous to his departure for Ireland, he found the cabinet, with Mr. Pitt at their head, strongly impressed with the same conviction; and," his lordship adds, "had I found it otherwise I never would have undertaken the government."

Lord Fitzwilliam, however, was by no means an enthusiast in the business. "It was his intention not to press the matter prematurely upon the Irish legislature, but rather to protract it to a period of more general tranquillity; but if the Catholics appeared determined to bring forward the question, he, on his part, would not refuse them a handsome support on the part of government."

Upon his arrival in Dublin, about the close of the year 1794, his lordship directly found, and he forthwith informed the British cabinet, "that the question would force itself upon his immediate consideration. The business had been already put into the hands of Mr. Grattan, in whom the lord-lieutenant could repose entire confidence; and a rising impatience being apparent among the Catholics after the presentation of the petitions, there was reason to apprehend, had any delay intervened, that the measure might be transferred to some other person, with whom the viceroy had no connection, and over whom he could entertain no hope of control." His lordship moreover observed to the English cabinet, "that the Irish nation were remarkably averse to the war, and some considerable concessions were consequently necessary to conciliate them." It being well understood that lord Fitzwilliam was a decided friend to the Catholic claims, that nobleman, on his entrance into the government, was received by the great mass of the people—tired of the inheritance of nakedness, oppression, and misery—with the loudest and most heartfelt congratulations ever offered upon any similar occasion.

In order to secure the eventual success of the wise and beneficent plans of the Irish government now in contemplation, it was deemed

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absolutely essential by the lord-lieutenant to remove from their stations certain persons who had ever stood forward as the determined enemies of Catholic emancipation, and indeed of every species of political improvement and reform. Among these were the chancellor of Ireland lord Fitzgibbon, Mr. Beresford, brother to the earl of Tyrone, an efficient member of the late administration, holding, amidst various other posts and places, the office of commissioner of the Irish treasury, "a person laboring," such is the language of lord Fitzwilliam, "under universal heavy suspicions, and who would have subjected his government to all the opprobrium and unpopularity attendant on his mal-administration"---also Mr. Wolfe, the attorney-general; and Mr. Toler, the solicitor-general; proposing nevertheless to alleviate their hard fate by peerages, pensions, or other sinecure emoluments.

In a letter written by the lord-lieutenant to the English secretary of state, dated January 15, 1795, he stated "his decided opinion that no time was to be lost; and that, if he received no peremptory instructions to the contrary, he should acquiesce in the pressing instances made to him on the part of the Catholics;" at the same time mentioning the actual dismissal of Mr. Beresford, who had for many years past been the secret mover and chief director of the

Irish counsels—an invisible minister, of more weight than all the ostensible ones—the spring and centre of the High Church, Tory, and Prerogative system in that kingdom. Notwithstanding this official intimation, no notice was taken, for many weeks, in any dispatches from England of the grand question of Catholic emancipation. But in this interval Mr. Beresford had repaired to London, and by his bold representations, not to the ministers only, but, as was confidently reported and believed, to the king himself, to whom he obtained easy access, he excited an extreme dislike and apprehension of the innovations projected by lord Fitzwilliam. At length, on the 14th of February, the lord-lieutenant received a letter from Mr. Pitt, remonstrating against the actual dismissal of Mr. Beresford, and that in contemplation of Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Toler. The very same mail also brought a letter from the duke of Portland to the chief governor expressing, for the first time, the doubts and difficulties of the British cabinet respecting the question of emancipation, and strongly recommending the postponement of the discussion in parliament. But this was no longer in lord Fitzwilliam's power. For the session having commenced on the 22d of January, Mr. Grattan had, two days previous to the receipt of these letters, moved for and obtained

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leave to bring in a bill for the further relief of his majesty's subjects professing the Roman-catholic religion. On the same evening that the lord lieutenant received the letters in question he replied to them very ably, representing at large "the imminent danger of now retracting on the Catholic business," and with noble resolution refusing "to be the person to raise a flame which nothing but the force of arms could keep down." And his excellency at the same time transmitted to the duke of Portland ample documents justificatory of his sentiments and conduct. But the British cabinet scarcely deigned to give them the reading. On the 21st of February a council was held, at which the duke of Portland assisted; and his grace had by this time become so obsequious a courtier, that he hesitated not to accede to the vote for disgracing his friend; and submitted to be the efficient instrument for transmitting to him the letters of recall—Lord Camden, son of the late illustrious nobleman of that name, the heir of his title, but by no means of his talents, being appointed his successor.

Appoint-
ment of lord
Camden to
the govern-
ment of Ire-
land.

The intelligence of this fatal dismissal was as a politico-volcanic convulsion, which shook the island to its centre. A vote of the house of commons, expressing high approbation of the conduct of lord Fitzwilliam, passed, on the motion

of Mr. Conolly, with the single dissentient voice of Mr. Beresford. Addresses, containing sentiments of mingled gratitude and regret, were presented from all parts of the kingdom to the late viceroy, and scarcely could the people restrain the emotions of their indignation. After a short visit to his estates in the county of Wicklow, lord Fitzwilliam, on the 25th of March, 1795, took his departure for England. On that memorable day no business was transacted. The citizens appeared in deep mourning, vast crowds accompanying his lordship to the water-side; and, though strong apprehensions were entertained of popular commotion, a profound and melancholy silence prevailed, as if a præternatural foreboding of the horrible events which were to succeed, oppressed and overwhelmed the minds of all with an unutterable weight of sorrow.

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Lord Camden arrived in Dublin on the 31st of March, and immediately assumed the reins of government. Some disturbances took place on the evening of that day, but they were soon quelled by the intervention of the military—a wretched omen of his disastrous administration. On the 13th of April the parliament met pursuant to adjournment, and on the 21st a motion was made by Mr. Grattan for an enquiry into the state of the nation, including the reasons for the recall of lord Fitzwilliam. “When Ireland,”

BOOK said this admired orator, “came forward cordial
 XXI. and confident with the offering of her treasure
 1795. and her blood, and resolute to stand or fall with
 the British nation, it was surely no proof of
 wisdom or generosity to select that moment to
 plant a dagger in her heart.” But strange to
 relate, this motion was negatived by a large ma-
 jority of that very parliament who almost una-
 nimously, and with apparent enthusiasm, had
 supported ALL the measures of the preceding
 administration. Such was in this unhappy
 country the wonderful and pernicious extent of
 the influence of the crown over the deliberations,
 or rather the determinations of the legislative
 body.

Catholic
 emancipa-
 tion bill re-
 jected.

On the 24th of April, Mr. Grattan presented
 his famous bill for the emancipation of the Ca-
 tholics, the principal debate on which took
 place on the second reading, May 4, when it
 was finally rejected by a decisive majority, to
 the inexpressible chagrin, gradually kindling
 into resentment and rage, of the great mass of
 the Irish nation. Two of the most remarkable
 speeches delivered in the course of this me-
 morable debate were those of Dr. Duigenan, a
 civilian, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor, a very
 young member of the house, representing the
 county of Kerry,—the first in opposition to, the
 latter in support of, the measure. From the

speech of doctor Duigenan, it appeared that the Irish Catholics, despairing of success, from the period of the recall of lord Fitzwilliam, had already ventured to adopt dangerous and unwarrantable combinations, in order to secure their eventual emancipation. A committee of nine, chosen by the Roman-catholics of Dublin, seemed to possess unlimited influence over the Catholic body throughout the kingdom. In consequence of their recommendation, petitions had been presented to parliament by the Catholic inhabitants of every county, city, and borough, in the four provinces. A meeting of the general assembly of Catholics had been held in the metropolis, April 9, at which, according to the report of doctor Duigenan, "several most traitorous and seditious speeches were publicly pronounced,—openly declaring that the war we were engaged in against the French was, on our part, and the part of our allies, an impious crusade against liberty; that all victories obtained by his majesty's arms were public calamities to Ireland, for which her children ought to weep; that they would hereafter never make any application to a British ministry, nor have any connection with them; that they would support a radical reform in the house of commons; and that this nation could never be happy till its government was changed into a republic, independent of Great

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Britain. From all which the doctor inferred that the general body of Irish Catholics had no pretensions to loyalty, and their petitions in that respect contained an acknowledged falsehood;—any bill therefore framed for the political aggrandisement of a body of people entertaining such detestable and traitorous sentiments ought to be rejected with the utmost contempt by the house—No sect of people denying the supremacy of the state in one half of its legislative and executive authority can with any propriety be put on a level with those who admit in the fullest manner the supremacy of the state, as well in ecclesiastical matters as temporal. As to the power of the Roman-catholics in the state, that, he said, must be estimated, not so much from their numbers as from their landed estates and personal property. The landed estates in the hands of the Protestants in Ireland are in the proportion of fifty to one; and their personal property is confined to merchants and traders in the chief commercial towns, and it certainly does not amount to the twentieth part of that of the Protestants! It is one of the arts practised by the patrons of this bill, to endeavour to intimidate the house by prophecies and forebodings of dreadful wars, tumults, and massacres, which they are constantly trumpeting forth, as the certain consequences of the rejec-

tion of this bill. The enjoyment of the representative franchise by Roman-catholics in Ireland would subvert the constitution; and if it were true that the enjoyment of the representative franchise is a certain consequence of the enjoyment of the elective, the argument of the patrons of this bill would only prove that we ought instantly to deprive the Roman-catholics of the elective franchise, for the preservation of the constitution in church and state. If you capacitate Roman-catholics to enjoy all the great offices of state, and to sit in parliament, by passing this bill; what is called by the republican faction a reform in parliament must be the immediate consequence, as the representation of all counties, and of all cities and boroughs where the election is popular, will be open to Catholic ambition. If you confess, by passing the present bill, that you cannot and dare not resist their present demand, how will you be able to resist their demand of a reform when their strength and influence will be increased tenfold, and when their interest will draw still closer the bands of confederacy between them and the republicans? All aristocratical influence will then be banished from this house; it will become a mere democratic assembly—and the more Catholic the more democratic. Then adieu to all establishment!—church and state

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will vanish before them; and an immediate conversion of this monarchical government into a republic, under the protection of France, will be the consequence. In fact, the Roman-catholics are now completely republicans and democrats:—the Stuart race to which they were attached are extinct; and they mortally hate an English government, and the house of Brunswic.”

Tainted as this speech was with bigotry and malignity, it contained some alarming assertions, which at least bore such affinity to truth as served to make that sort of impression which it is difficult perfectly to counteract. On the other hand, the speech of Mr. O'Connor, amidst a grand display of just and beneficial principles of government, breathed a spirit of romance and enthusiasm in the cause of liberty, very pardonable indeed, if this be not too cold a term to use in speaking of the glowing effusions of a youthful and generous mind, but which a wise and cautious statesman, looking chiefly to the practical consequences of measures, would be compelled to regard with extreme jealousy, and to receive with many modifications adapted to the actual state of things. “Is it (said this animated orator) because we were the most wretched and miserable nation in Europe as long as this system of monopoly and exclusion, for

which the gentlemen on the opposite side of the house contend under the title of Constitution in Church and State, remained whole and entire—is it because we have heard those gentlemen, year after year, predict the ruin of the country from extending the constitution to our Catholic countrymen, and that we have seen the country flourish in an exact proportion to that extension,—that we should now stop short on their authority, and consecrate the remainder of the system of monopoly and exclusion? Let the men who have profited by the old system, to the monstrous aggrandizement of themselves and their connections, risk what they please in its defence; but let me conjure the house to consider that they are no longer legislating for the barbarous ignorant ages, which have gone by, but for the intelligent age in which we live, and for the yet more enlightened centuries which are to come.—The church we are told is in danger—the interest of the Protestant religion is at stake; but those who make this objection have confounded the interest of the clergy with the interest of religion. I would rest the whole argument on the fact; I would ask, has the Protestant religion been promoted in proportion as the Protestant clergy have been enriched? Has the Catholic religion decayed according to the views of those who doomed the professors of it

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to poverty? Has not this ecclesiastical establishment sown the seeds of eternal rancor, animosity, and litigation, between the pastor and his flock? Does it not appear to the world as if this establishment was instituted to make the people sensible of their indigence, by a comparison with the wealth of the church, the dignities and preferments of which serve as a provision for the families and connections of the political robbers of the state, and the political advocates for the existing system; so that the Protestant religion seems intended rather to support the establishment than the establishment to support the religion? I here avow myself the zealous and earnest advocate for the most unqualified emancipation of my Catholic countrymen, in the firm conviction that the accursed monopoly of the rights and liberties of my country, which has hitherto effectually withstood the efforts of a part of the community, must yield to the unanimous will, to the decided interest, and to the general effort of a whole people.—We must indeed be a spiritless nation if we do not resent the baseness of a British minister, who has excited our hopes in order to blast them after. He has sported with the feelings of a whole nation. Raising the cup with one hand to the parched lip of expectancy, he has dashed it to the earth with the other, in all the wantonness of insult, and with

all the aggravation of contempt. I trust the people of England are too wise and too just to attempt to force upon us measures they would reject with disdain themselves; but if they should be so weak, or so wicked, as to suffer themselves to be seduced by a man to whose soul duplicity and finesse are congenial,--if we are to be dra-gooned into measures against the interest and against the sense of a whole nation,---I trust in God, Britain will find in this country a spirit no way inferior to her own. If instead of reciprocal advantage nothing is to be reaped from the connection with England but venality, injury, insult, degradation, and poverty, it is acting only upon the common feelings of human-nature if the people of this kingdom are driven to court the alliance of any nation able and willing to break the chains of such a bondage. You are at this moment at the most awful period of your lives, you stand committed with your country, and on this night your adoption or rejection of this bill must determine, in the eyes of the Irish nation, which of the two you represent-- the minister of England, or the people of Ireland. The weakness of your title should only make you the more circumspect in the exercise of your power. Will you not take warning by the fate of the government of France, which, by not adapting its conduct to the changes of the public mind,

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BOOK has brought ruin on itself, and destruction on its
XXI. country. Do not imagine that the minds of
1795. your countrymen have been stationary, while that of all Europe has been so rapidly progressive; for you must be blind not to perceive that the whole European mind has undergone a revolution, neither confined to this nor to that country, but as general as the mighty causes which have given it birth, and which still continue to feed its growth." The bill was at length, fatally for Ireland, rejected by a majority of 71 voices; and the house standing, according to the striking expression of Mr. O'Connor, *committed with their country*, were, however tremendous the responsibility, obliged to abide the issue.

Upon the whole, it was abundantly manifest, that the political rectitude of this decision depended not upon the abstract justice of the claims insisted upon on the part of the Catholics, for of this there could be no possible doubt, but upon the grand practical consideration how far those demands could be granted with safety to the existing government, which rested for support upon the continuance of the Protestant ascendancy in parliament. The application of principles, however generally or abstractedly right, must be determined and modified by circumstances; and the counsels of nations ought to be guided by an enlightened benevolence,

and not by an implicit regard to any metaphysic theory. Allowing and even asserting this as a proposition most important and incontrovertible, it nevertheless appears that, upon every principle of policy as well as justice, the claim of Catholic emancipation ought to have been conceded in its full extent, and with the most cheerful concurrence of the government; for this was merely admitting the catholic body to a participation of civil liberty, not of political power. True it is, that the representative franchise constituted a necessary part of the general system of emancipation; but, upon the present system of representation, it was computed, that scarcely twenty Catholics would have been elected members. The question of emancipation was therefore by the Catholics invariably associated with that of a reform in parliament. How far this reform, in the actual state of Ireland, could have been granted with safety was a question of deep political consideration: but, unhappily, it was never suffered fairly, and in its full force, to come before parliament. Emancipation, which was both politic and just, was refused, to preclude the eventual legislative discussion of this topic; and an immediate and certain danger of the highest magnitude was incurred, in order to avert a remote, contingent, and comparatively trivial one. This is sufficient

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to place the guilt and folly of those who resolved on the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam in a conspicuous point of view, more especially after they had by previous encouragement raised universally the most sanguine expectations in the minds of the Catholics, whose subsequent anger and astonishment must have been excited in the same proportion. But on an occasion of this momentous nature it will be pardonable, should history deviate a little into the regions of speculation, and enquire what would have been the progress of the public mind had the Catholic claim of emancipation been granted? In this case, as the Catholic would have stood, as to the privileges of the constitution, in all respects upon a level with the Protestant,—as the nation, instead of being distracted by the animosities of opposing factions, would have become one and indivisible,—by far the most powerful motive would have been wanting to induce the Catholics to urge the question of parliamentary reform with the same earnestness, or rather vehemence, with which they prosecuted a claim in which every individual of that vast body was more or less personally interested. In case emancipation had been conceded, every reflecting Catholic would have asked himself, with respect to parliamentary reform, in the popular sense, What benefit shall I derive from it beyond what I now

enjoy? and the answer must have been, "No practical benefit whatever." The moral certainty, therefore is, that the bulk of the Catholics would have been well satisfied with that species of moderate reform in church and state which would have still left a vast preponderance of power in the hands of the Protestants, who were in actual possession of a vast preponderance of property. The leaders of the Catholics themselves must have been perfectly sensible, that to accomplish such a reform or change in the system of representation as would have secured to that body a majority in the house of commons,—which, considering the amazing weight of property in the hands of the Protestants, it is indeed probable that universal suffrage itself would have been far from effecting,—must have required an effort which, when the Catholics were invested with all the privileges of the constitution, it was neither worth their while to make, nor could they have expected any adequate support in the attempt.

Wisdom and virtue are surely not confined to Protestants; ALL men among the Catholics, who were not actuated by the mere phrenzy of innovation, would have seen that, as members of a great empire, of which they were the minority, it was both their duty and their interest to acquiesce in the established order of things,

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even in that country of which they constituted the majority, when it was founded upon, and rendered conformable to, the principles of justice and equity. Considering the hazards and dangers of resistance to established government, it is not in human-nature that it should proceed, if general, from mere caprice. Great injuries must be previously sustained, and the passions must be violently inflamed, before such extremities are resorted to. But emancipation, and its attendant moderate and practical reforms, would have annihilated the actual injury sustained by the Catholics; and an habitual disposition on the part of the government to conciliation and concession, so far as the general safety and welfare of the state permitted, would effectually have banished from the subsequent investigation those angry passions which every wise government will carefully avoid exciting: on the contrary, the opposite emotions of gratitude, confidence, and affection, would by this means have been powerfully awakened in the breasts of that susceptible and generous people; liberal allowance would have been made for the real difficulties of government; and the Irish Catholics would have felt in all its force the axiom of the celebrated MILTON, who justly and nobly says: “For this is not the liberty which we can hope for, that no grievance ever should arise in the

commonwealth--*that* let no man in this world expect: but where complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained that wise men look for*." BOOK
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Most unfortunately for the interests of the British empire, its affairs had now been for ten years in the hands of a minister of great eloquence, art, and address indeed, but who was destitute alike of that enlarged comprehension of mind, and of those generous feelings of the heart, which form, when combined, that noblest of human characters--the genuine patriot statesman. The voice of Mr. Pitt, when aspiring to political pre-eminence, had been beyond all others loud in the clamor of reform; and, when he had attained to power, his hand was found beyond all others heavy in the oppression and persecution of those who had listened to his doctrines and had acted upon his principles.

The session of parliament in Ireland ended June the 5th, 1795. The lord-lieutenant, in his speech, touched lightly upon the distracted state of the country, consequent upon the rejection of the late bill of emancipation; contenting himself with an earnest recommendation to the members of both houses to make those exertions

* Milton's *Areopagitica*.

BOOK XXI. 1795. which *the times* demanded, and enforcing the necessity of an exact submission to the laws—
 an exhortation, alas! in the present temper, or rather distemper, of *the times*, altogether un-
 availing and useless. From this period the famous political association styled the Society of United Irishmen rapidly extended itself over the whole country, including all the Catholics, and a large proportion of the Protestants, of the kingdom; and from this period also the leaders of this association began, as was too truly predicted, to entertain very dangerous views, and to form illegal and treasonable connections and correspondences with the government of France. A spirit of universal disaffection prevailed. Secret oaths of adherence to the association were administered. Agents were sent to negotiate with the Convention. Acts of sedition, rapine, and murder, were perpetrated by the most desperate of the lawless and licentious populace against the bigoted and violent supporters of government, who, on the other hand, confederated together for the purposes of security and revenge, under the name of Orangemen, in societies styled Orange-Lodges. Mutual injuries soon generated a most inveterate and mutual hatred between these two descriptions of citizens, one of which was beyond comparison superior in numbers, the other in property, in

Distracted
 state of
 Ireland.

legal authority, in military force. These dissensions gradually increased, till the whole land exhibited a scene of consternation, blood, and horror. It has even been positively asserted that entire districts of Catholics were mercilessly proscribed by the human fiends styling themselves Orangemen, and compelled to remove with their families and effects beyond the Shannon, under the penalty of having their habitations burned, their property destroyed, and their persons endangered. 'To CONNAUGHT or to HELL!' was the infernal mandate of these villains. Hope fled the country;—men acted under the instigation of revenge, and took counsel of despair. The dreadful effects of the weak and wicked system of misgovernment, recommended and acted upon by the enemies of Catholic liberty, and indeed of all liberty, were fully apparent. By the operation of this system Ireland was lashed into madness, and driven to follies and to crimes from which her sober reason would have shrunk with detestation.

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From this view of civil transactions it is now necessary to transfer our attention to military concerns, which can scarcely exhibit a picture more bloody or disastrous. It has been already mentioned that the British army, after the abandonment of Nimeguen, took the route of Arnheim and Deventer, under the command of ge-

Military
transactions.

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neral sir Ralph Abercrombie. They reached the last of these places at the end of January 1795, closely pursued by a far superior force. In their precipitate retreat—or, to speak plainly, their unintermitted flight—through the country, they continued to suffer incredible hardships—the partial thaws which took place obliging the soldiers to wade through torrents of mud and water. Although they every-where endeavoured to destroy the magazines in their line of march, vast quantities of artillery, ammunition, and stores, fell into the hands of the French. After a very short halt at Deventer the army moved again toward the German frontier; and on the 12th of February they crossed the Ems at Rheine, being much harassed by the advanced parties of the enemy. At Groningen the division commanded by lord Cathcart was refused admittance; but after a long series of dismal disasters, of which the detail may well be spared, the shattered remains of this fine body of troops, supposed, at their departure from England, to amount to 35,000 men, now reduced to about a fifth part of that number, reached the city of Bremen on the 27th and 28th of March; and soon afterwards they embarked on board the transports lying ready to receive them in the Elbe, for their native country.

Shattered
remains of
the duke of
York's ar-
my em-
bark for
England.

In consequence of and encouraged by the

continued successes and triumphs of France, the grand duke of Tuscany, first of all the potentates who had joined the coalition, ventured to recognise the Gallic republic; and through the intervention of his minister count Carletti, concluded at Paris a separate treaty of peace with the convention, and resuming openly his original system of neutrality, he declared in a public proclamation dated March 1, (1795), "That whilst he enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing Tuscany superior as it were to the occurrences of the times, resting peaceful and quiet on that neutrality which was constantly respected by the French republic, he found himself involved in those unpleasant transactions which are already known to all Europe. Although his royal highness was unable to resist them, yet he consented to nothing but the removal of the French minister resident at his court--the only act which the imperious circumstances of the times could extort from him; and his royal highness now expressly repeals all acts of adhesion, consent and accession to the armed coalition against the French republic." The regent of Sweden also following with equal wisdom the pacific policy of the grand duke, sent the baron de Staal to Paris to assure the French nation of the friendship entertained for them by the court of Stockholm.

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Peace be-
tween
France and
Prussia.

Early in the new year the French armies on the Rhine and Neckar reduced the strong fort du Rhein, on the western bank of the river, which covered the city of Manheim; and formed the blockade of the important town of Mentz. During the winter, negotiations had been publicly carrying on between the Convention and the court of Berlin; and on the 5th of April a treaty of peace was signed at Basle between the two powers, the chief condition of which imported that the French should continue to occupy that part of the Prussian territory situated on the left bank of the Rhine, actually in their possession—all definitive arrangements to be postponed till a general pacification shall take place with the German empire. By a subsequent convention a line of demarcation was drawn, comprehending the northern circles of Germany, beyond which the French consented not to carry their arms; and soon afterwards peace was concluded with the French republic by the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel and the ELECTOR of HANOVER!

A declaration dated from Berlin May 2, was promulgated by his Prussian majesty in vindication of the wise and necessary measures adopted on his part. “After three bloody campaigns, fertile in death and desolation, was not suffering humanity,” says this excellent manifesto, so

opposite to that formerly published, “brought sufficiently low?—His majesty cannot wholly sacrifice himself, and leave his dominions entirely a prey to destruction, for the sake of participating in the further experiment of a war, the result of which, were it even as favorable as possible, would still be inferior to a present negotiation of peace. All considerations of foreign and domestic relations, as likewise the sacred duties which his majesty owes to the prosperity of his provinces, to his subjects longing for peace and tranquillity, and to the happiness of his own royal bosom, summon him most urgently to renounce forthwith a war whose further issue must only prove ruin past redemption.”

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Uninterrupted conquest still attended the arms of France on the side of the Pyrenées. The siege of the strong maritime town of Roses, situated eight leagues to the north-east of Gironne, in the province of Catalonia, was begun about the close of the preceding year (1794). The heavy artillery had scarcely effected a slight breach when the volunteers of the besieging army begged permission to mount; but the garrison, not daring to stand the assault, embarked, during the darkness of the night, on board the vessels lying in the harbour; and the French took bloodless possession of that im-

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Peace be-
tween
France and
Spain.

portant fortress. A variety of engagements succeeded, in which the republicans had uniformly the advantage; and, at length, gaining the open country, no impediment seemed to remain to prevent their marching to Madrid. But the king of Spain, seized with just terror, transmitted orders to Don Domingo d'Yriate, whom he had nominated his plenipotentiary at Basle, immediately to conclude a treaty of pacification, which, on behalf of the French, was signed on the 22d of July by M. Barthelemy. By this treaty France agreed to evacuate her conquests in Spain, and the catholic king ceded to the French republic all the Spanish part of the island of St. Domingo—an invaluable acquisition, and capable of unlimited improvement.

The campaign of this summer in Italy afforded no incident worthy of historic notice: it is sufficient to say that the French failed in their attempts to establish themselves in the open country of Piedmont.

Surrender
of Luxemburg.

On the 7th of June the impregnable fortress of Luxemburg, which had been in a state of blockade from the time that France had subjected the circumjacent country, capitulated upon the most honorable terms. The garrison consisted of 10,000 men, commanded by mareschal Bender, a brave and skilful officer, who might, and undoubtedly would, have continued to de-

send the place, upon the works of which little impression had been made, if he had not deemed the release of so large a garrison more than an equivalent to the emperor in such circumstances for the surrender of a fortress which it was utterly out of his power to succour. The possession of Luxemburg completed the conquest of the country to the left of the Rhine, with the exception of Mentz, which had now been fruitlessly besieged for several months. The Austrians, commanded by generals Clairfait and Wurmser, maintained an uninterrupted intercourse with the garrison, from Cassel, on the opposite bank. It being at length perceived that the city could not be reduced until a perfect investment was formed, a very large body of the French troops, under general Jourdain, passed the Rhine for that purpose at Dusseldorf, which surrendered without resistance—the Austrians retiring to a strong position on the Lahn. Another body, equal in force, commanded by general Pichegru, effected the passage of the river at Mannheim, of which city they took immediate possession, on terms very favorable to the inhabitants. The investment of Mentz was now at last accomplished, and a confident hope was entertained of its speedy capitulation; but the event shewed the uncertainty of war: a division of general Pichegru's army being ordered to the attack of a post

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Indecisive
operations,
on the
Rhine.

BOOK necessary to prevent the junction of the forces of
XXI. Clairfait and Wurmser, now marching to the re-
1795. lief of Mentz, were over-powered and compelled
to retreat with precipitation to Mannheim; and
Jourdain, thus deprived of the expected co-operation of Pichegru, found his position no longer
tenable. The Austrians also, by an attack on neutral territory, had taken part of his heavy artillery: the French general was therefore obliged to raise the siege, and he repassed the Rhine at Dusseldorf, much harassed by general Clairfait in his retreat. The Austrians even pursued the enemy across the river, and beat up the quarters of the French, spreading terror over the country as far as Luxemburg.

General Wurmser, on the other side, proceeded to the attack of Mannheim; and in revenge for the too easy surrender of this place to the French by the elector, who was anxious for its preservation, the Austrians immediately began a bombardment, which in a short time destroyed the principal buildings, public and private, of that beautiful city, reducing it to a scene of horrid desolation; and of these smoking ruins, once Mannheim, the besiegers, after making the usual regular approaches, had the satisfaction to become masters, the garrison surrendering themselves prisoners of war. Various indecisive encounters ensued between the different armies

during the remainder of this campaign, which was at length terminated by an armistice of three months, a measure never tolerated by the committees of the Convention under its former Jacobin chiefs, but now agreed upon by the generals, and ratified by the respective belligerent powers.

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The marine of France, being extremely reduced by the disasters of the war, the naval transactions of the present summer, owing to the continued caution of the enemy, are not very interesting or memorable. In the month of March an engagement took place in the Mediterranean, off the coast of Corsica, between two squadrons of nearly equal force, commanded by the admirals Hotham and Richery, which terminated honorably for the English. The *Ca-Ira* of eighty, and the *Censeur* of seventy-four guns, struck to the British flag: but on the other hand the French captured the *Berwick*, of seventy-four guns, on her way to join the fleet; and the *Illustrious*, of the same rate, being much damaged in the fight, was driven on shore, and lost near Avenza. Soon after this, another partial action took place near St. Fiorenzo, and the *Alcide*, a French ship of the line, struck her colors; but, from some fatal accident, blew up before she could be taken possession of by the English.

Naval engagement off the coast of Corsica.

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Skilful re-
treat of ad-
miral Corn-
wallis.

The very skilful and gallant retreat of admiral Cornwallis, with a small squadron of five ships of the line, from a far superior force, is not undeserving of historic mention. The admiral had been for some weeks cruizing off Belleisle, where he made some valuable mercantile captures; but on the 16th of June, standing in with the land near the Penmarks, the Phaëton frigate made a signal for an enemy's fleet, consisting of no less than thirteen line-of-battle ships. At nine the next morning the French began the attack, which was vigorously repelled by the English, who kept up a running fight the whole day, without suffering the enemy to gain the least advantage. At length, by a well-timed and happy deception, signals were thrown out, by the repeating-frigate, that a superior British fleet was in sight, on which the assailants thought it most prudent to sheer off.

French
squadron
defeated by
lord Brid-
port.

But on the 23d of the same month the French squadron actually fell in with a superior fleet, under lord Bridport, off port L'Orient. The engagement began early in the morning, and lasted till three in the afternoon, by which time three capital ships had struck their colors. The rest of the squadron, keeping close in shore, escaped into L'Orient. On the other hand, the French made, in the month of October, a capture of thirty merchantmen from the Mediter-

anean and Levant, with a ship of the line, constituting part of the convoy.

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In the West Indies, notwithstanding the disparity of naval force, the French, after recovering the whole of Guadaloupe, attacked with success the fort of Tiburon in St. Domingo, and made themselves masters of St. Eustatius. Their bold and restless leader, Victor Hugues, found means to excite such dangerous insurrections of the negroes and people of color in the English islands, that to attempt any other than defensive measures seemed wholly impracticable. St. Lucia, after a violent and bloody conflict with the insurgents, was reluctantly evacuated by the governor-general, Stewart; and Grenada, Dominique, and St. Vincent's, were preserved with great difficulty. Those whom the sword spared were taken off by the ravages of the yellow fever—a species of pestilential disorder which now for the first time appeared, at least in its present dreadful form, in those baneful climes; and the West Indies proved, as usual, the grave of the Europeans who were destined to that fatal service.

The islands of St. Eustatius and St. Lucia recovered by the French.

A war, originating in an accidental and trivial cause, was also commenced, on the part of the English government in Jamaica, against the Maroon Indians, a free nation inhabiting a mountainous tract in the interior of the island. As they were justly deemed very hostile and

War against the Maroons in Jamaica.

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dangerous neighbours, the war was conducted in the dreadful spirit of extermination; and a new species of warfare, new at least to England, was resorted to by the governor, lord Balcarras, who sent to Cuba for a corps of Spanish chasseurs, with *blood-hounds*, to be employed in the pursuit and detection of these wild Indians in their secret haunts; and the miserable remains of whom were, in the result, transported across the ocean to perish in the lands provided for them, amid the frozen wastes of Upper Canada.

In the month of October 1794, in consequence of the rapid progress of the French arms, an urgent application had been made by the Dutch merchants to the British minister for leave to deposit their treasure and stores in England, without paying the duty *ad valorem* at the Custom-house. But Mr. Pitt replied, "That he could not consent to relax the revenue laws in this instance, since it would only serve to propagate in this country *the groundless and chimerical apprehensions* entertained in Holland." On the 16th of January following, nevertheless, a royal proclamation was issued, permitting all goods, wares, merchandize, &c. belonging to the inhabitants of the United Provinces, to be landed in any of the ports of Great Britain, and to be secured in the warehouses of his majesty, &c. But the time was now past; the French were in possession

of Holland, and no benefit could be derived from this tardy indulgence. A very abrupt termination, however, of these friendly dispositions took place on the part of the British government ; for, on the 19th of January, a new proclamation was issued, conformably to the ministerial pole-star of existing circumstances, abstracted from all considerations either prospective or retrospective—containing peremptory orders to seize whatever Dutch vessels were found in the ports of Great Britain ; in consequence of which, five ships of war were secured lying in Plymouth Sound, nine East-Indiamen, and about sixty sail of other vessels. On the 9th of February a third proclamation was published, authorizing the capture of all Dutch ships and property ; and letters of marque and reprisal were also, after an interval of some months, granted ; so that war against Holland was virtually declared : and, before the end of the summer, the famous settlement of the Cape surrendered to vice-admiral Elphinstone almost without resistance.

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Cape of
Good Hope
captured by
the English.

In the course of the present year, also, divers of the Dutch East Indian colonies fell into the hands of the English, being, for the most part, very ill prepared for defence ; amongst the rest, in the month of August, Trincomalé ; and soon afterwards, Columbo, and the other Dutch settlements in the isle of Ceylon. In October following,

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Malacca, situated on the peninsula of that name, and Chinsura, in the bay of Bengal; likewise, about the same time, Cochin, valuable for its harbour, on the coast of Malabar.

Although the conquest of the Cape was above all others, perhaps, calculated to flatter the vanity of the people of England, it is certain that every purpose of real commercial advantage was fully answered by it while in the possession of the Dutch. The cession of it, therefore, to this country, would only entail upon Great Britain in perpetuity an useless expence, causing a fresh increase to the enormous influence of the crown, by the additional offices of which it would necessarily have the disposal. It could not fail, likewise, to be remembered by the nations of Europe, that the original pretext for the war was the protection of the Dutch commonwealth, whose territory we had not hesitated to dismember, and of whose property we had now shewn ourselves at least as strongly disposed as France to join in the pillage and the plunder. If the object of the war was the defence of Holland, whose most doubtful rights the court of London had affected to guard with such vigilant jealousy, the British ministers might consider themselves as of all statesmen the most unfortunate in being so soon compelled, not merely to relinquish their object, but to act upon a prin-

ciple diametrically opposite to the grand and primary purpose of their own system of policy. BOOK
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But of all the naval expeditions of the present summer, by far the most memorable was that which was attempted by the English government in aid of the inhabitants of La Vendée and La Loire. In order to exhibit a clear and connected view of this disastrous enterprize, it will be requisite to take a general retrospect of the interior and domestic concerns of France. At the commencement of the year 1795, the rebellion in the 1795.
State of affairs in
France. ancient provinces of Anjou, Poitou, and Brittany, inhabited chiefly by a barbarous, ignorant, and bigoted, race, blindly attached to their priests, as barbarous and as bigoted as themselves, seemed, in consequence of the lenient measures adopted by the new government, nearly and happily suppressed. On the 3d of March a formal treaty was signed by general Cangleaux with the chiefs of the Vendéans and CHOUANS, so named from their nocturnal depredations, who made their public entry into the city of Nantz, Charette himself being at the head of the procession, accompanied by the Conventional representatives—the people ceasing not to exclaim, “Vive la paix ! Vive l’union !” It was, however, remarked, that Charette and his companions in arms appeared silent and melancholy,

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as if they already repented their engagements of submission to the republic.

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Revengeful
proceedings
of the Gi-
ronde fac-
tion.

Although the different parties into which the Convention was divided had coalesced, in order to effect the overthrow of the infamous Robespierre, no sooner had the common danger subsided, than the ancient and rooted animosity of the opposing factions began once more to display itself; and a violent struggle soon succeeded between those who, having acted with Robespierre, wished rather to mitigate than to abolish the atrocities of the revolutionary government—and those who were desirous not merely to establish a regular constitution, but to bring those persons to punishment whom they regarded as the aiders and abettors of the Robespierrian tyranny. Since the restoration of the remaining representatives of the Gironde party, and the freedom of debate, the latter description of members had obtained a decided authority in the Convention. On the 27th of December, 1794, Merlin of Douay reported from the united committees, that there was ground for examining into the conduct of Barrère, Billaud Varennes, Collot D'Herbois, and Vadier. A decree, instituting the proposed enquiry, immediately passed, and a commission of twenty-one members was appointed to report upon the facts imputed in the

denunciations. Certainly it may well admit of a doubt, considering all circumstances, whether this procedure of the prevailing party in the Convention was the result of a pure and enlightened patriotism, or whether it was suggested in whole, or in part, by the base and criminal motives of personal hatred and revenge. The characters of some of the present Conventional leaders,—of Merlin, the author of the late report, for instance—or of Tallien, the Mark Antony, as he has been styled, of the revolution, a man immersed in dissipation and pleasure,—did not, it must be acknowledged, countenance the opinion of any heroic exertion of virtue. The accusation of Barrère was very unpopular. That extraordinary man had been known, on various occasions, to employ his influence in alleviating the horrors of that merciless tyranny of which he was, on other occasions, the too well-known and active instrument. He had also the merit of joining, when the success was as yet very doubtful, the combination formed against the monster Robespierre; but, above all, the wonderfully energetic speech by which he encouraged and excited the people of France to rise as one man, and expel the hirelings of despots from the territories of the republic, resounded still in the ears of every genuine friend of liberty. The criminal violence of that com-

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mittee of which he had been a member was absorbed in the recollection of the victories gained under its auspices ; and now that so many sacrifices had been made to the majesty of offended justice, the public seemed willing that the errors and even the delinquencies of men placed in stations so perilous, and charged with the safety of their country, contending for its existence against a confederacy so potent and profligate, should, for the sake of their political merits, be for ever buried in oblivion.

On the 2d of March (1795) the report from the Committee of Twenty-one was made by M. Saladin, who declared that the accused had exercised a despotic influence over the national representation, and that their guilt was manifest. The trial of the deputies was then fixed for the 22d of March, before which Vadier found means to escape in the disguise of a courier. A most able defence in behalf of the accused was made, not by themselves merely, but by Lindet and Carnot, two members of the same Committee of Safety, but who were exempted from the decree of accusation. They insisted with one voice, that, during the reign of Robespierre, they had all acted under compulsion, and that the individual who had dared to oppose the usurper must have been inevitably sacrificed. In the mean time, extreme dissatisfaction, fo-

mented by the Jacobin party, was apparent amongst the lower classes of the Parisians; and, on the 1st of April, an immense and desperate multitude proceeded to the hall of the Convention, exclaiming, that they were the same men who had stood forward on behalf of the nation on the 14th of July, the 10th of August, and the 31st of May. They said they were resolved to be free, and that the accused patriots should not be sacrificed to the passions of the other party. For several successive hours, the Convention remained imprisoned in the hall where they held their session, and were obliged to hear and to endure the insults and menaces of these lawless ruffians. But the reign of Jacobinism was short: the citizens assembled in arms at the sound of the tocsin, and marched in great force before evening towards the hall, surrounding it on all sides for the protection of the National Convention. A decree was passed to punish the agitators of these disorders; and Dumont observed, "that all these tumults were excited only to prevent the trials of the three great criminals. Let us (said he) abolish the pain of death, but cast out these monsters from our society." It was accordingly decreed, that Barrère, Collot, and Billaud Varennes, should be transported to Guiana, and that they should be sent thither immediately. General Pichegru, being at this time

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in Paris, was appointed by the Convention to the command of the armed force of that great city. By his authority and exertions tranquillity was soon restored, and the occasion embraced to arrest divers other leaders of the Mountain or Jacobin faction, who were sent to the castle of Ham in Picardy, amongst whom were Choudieu and Duhem ; and the list of the proscribed was afterwards increased by a large addition of names—Thuriot, Levasseur, and Cambon, being of the number.

Though the conduct of the Convention might upon the whole seem praise-worthy, it could not be concealed that they punished the abuses of arbitrary power upon arbitrary principles, uniting in themselves the discordant characters of accusers, witnesses, and judges ; and the establishment of a regular constitution of government became more and more the anxious object of the general wish. Before the end of April, a committee of eleven was nominated for the important purpose of organizing a constitutional code for the consideration of the Conventional Assembly, consisting of Thibeaudeau, Lepaux, Lanjuinais, Boissy D'Anglas, Louvet, Daunou, and five others of less note.

The trial of the infamous Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, and the ex-judges and jurors of the late Revolutionary Tribunal, was, from

various causes, deferred till the 8th of May of the present year. The greatest crimes and atrocities being clearly proved against this abominable court of judicature, amounting to an actual and complete subversion of all public justice, and to the substitution in its room of a system of judicial assassination,—the wretch Fouquier, and fifteen others, who occupied the stations either of judges or jurors of this detestable tribunal, were executed the following morning, amidst the execrations of the people.

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It deserves mention that count Luckner, son of the late brave marechal Luckner, repairing at this period to Paris from Denmark, where he resided, occupying the office of chamberlain to the king, was, on application to the Convention, put into full possession of his father's property: the decree passed on that occasion expressly specifying that "marechal Luckner was put to death in an unjust manner by the murderous sword of a faction—the deadly enemies of liberty, who brought him to the scaffold because they feared his talents and the ardor of his patriotism."

At this period the Convention concluded (May 15) not only a definitive treaty of peace, but of alliance offensive and defensive, with the Dutch republic, whose territories, considered as those of a vanquished foe, had been treated by the French with remarkable lenity and modera-

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tion. Indeed, the Convention had from the first distinguished between the stadtholder and the people of the Seven United Provinces; regarding the latter as enemies only so far as they entered into the views and measures of the former, which it was notorious that a vast majority of them disapproved and detested. The articles of the treaty were upon the whole very equitable, and even generous; but equity and generosity proved eventually, in this case, as in most others, the best policy. The Convention acknowledged and guarantied the independence of the republic, and also the abolition of the stadtholderate; and they agreed to make no peace with any country in which Holland should not be included. All the arsenals and magazines were restored; and, as the operations of the war were for the future to be carried on in concert, the Dutch government was even allowed the privilege of sending a deputy who should sit and have a deliberative voice in the Committee of Public Welfare at Paris. All the Dutch territories were restored without reserve, excepting that part of Dutch Flanders which lies to the south of the Maese—Maastricht, Venlo, and their dependencies. And, at the epoch of a general peace, it was provided that cession should be made to the United Provinces, of portions of territory equivalent in extent to

the cessions made on their part, and in the situation most convenient to the republic.”

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The exiled deputies of the Jacobin faction had embarked on board different vessels, in order to proceed on their voyage to Guiana; but Cambon and Thuriot having, unfortunately for the country, effected their escape, found means to excite, upon their secret arrival in Paris, another and more dangerous insurrection than the former; previous to which, seditious placards were posted up in various parts of the city, where a scarcity approaching to famine at this time prevailed, prefaced with the alarming and paradoxical principle, “that insurrection is the most sacred duty of the people.” Early on the 20th of May, the *tocsin* was sounded in the fauxbourg St. Antoine, and the *générale* beaten. On the meeting of the Convention, a decree passed, ordering all the citizens to their respective sections, outlawing every person who should head the insurgents, and declaring the sitting permanent. But, in defiance of these injunctions, a vast multitude surrounded, as before, the hall of the Convention, which was ordered to be cleared, and the gendarmes were summoned to protect the persons of the deputies, and a severe conflict took place between the soldiery and the insurgents. Loud cries were heard in the environs of the hall, clamoring for

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bread and the constitution of 1793. At length, general Hoche was appointed to the command of the whole armed force of Paris, but the disorders in the hall of sitting still continued; and, in the midst of the tumult, one of the national representatives, Ferrand, was killed by repeated strokes of a sabre, in one of the corridors, his head being afterwards severed from the body, and brought into the hall of the Convention upon a pike. Boissy D'Anglas, the president, remained firm and immovable during this scene of violence and uproar—the Convention resembling more a camp of armed men than an assembly of legislators. But a great number of the members of the Gironde having gradually left the hall, the Mountain or Jacobin party, finding themselves the majority, took advantage of this moment of consternation and terror to repeal, amid the enthusiastic acclamations of the populace, several decrees which had been at different times levelled against them. This usurped authority was of short duration—the military, accompanied by a great number of citizens in arms, making their appearance in great force, on which the multitude made their escape through doors and windows with great precipitation. The pretended decrees of repeal were then, on the motion of Bourdon de l'Oise, themselves repealed, or rather annulled,

and several of the Jacobin members concerned in the transaction put under arrest.

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These shocking disorders, though suppressed, were not extinguished; for, on the next day, the Convention was again surrounded by the populace in the like manner; and cannon being planted in the Place of the Carousel, a deputation was reluctantly admitted from the insurgents. To the demands of this deputation the president was compelled to return a favorable answer, and to incur also the disgrace of giving the fraternal embrace to the members of it, who were moreover invited to the honors of the sitting. On the third day, the Convention, amidst apprehensions and alarms, resumed the exercise of their functions. But, on the fourth, the inhabitants of the fauxbourgs were once more preparing to attack the hall of the Convention, when the citizens of Paris again rose in defence of the national representatives, every avenue to the Tuilleries being filled with armed citizens. The Conventional Assembly, thus supported, took courage, and declared the fauxbourg St. Antoine in a state of rebellion, and ordered the sections of Paris, sustained by the regular military force, to march instantly against them. The wretched and deluded populace seeing themselves invested on every side, and exposed to an immediate cannonade or bombardment,

BOOK at length surrendered at discretion. A decree
XXI. of the Convention then passed for disarming
1795. the Jacobins; the use of pikes was abolished,
and the cannon of the several sections delivered
up by order of the Convention. Several arrests
and executions of the leaders of this dangerous
insurrection followed immediately the final sup-
pression of it; order was every where restored,
and the flaming Mountain was once more over-
thrown. Its famous chiefs, Collot D'Herbois,
Billaud Varennes, and Barrère, were remanded
back to take their trial; but the two former
had already sailed, and Barrère only remained,
who was committed to close imprisonment. The
insurrection of the Jacobins in Paris depended
upon, and was concerted with, various others in
the different departments. At Lyons, at Tou-
lon, and Marseilles, that furious faction made
efforts, with all the violence of despair, to re-
possess themselves of the power they had so in-
famously abused, and so deservedly lost; but
they were without much difficulty defeated. At
Lyons, the re-action was terrible—the chief
agents and instruments of Collot D'Herbois
having been massacred in prison; and, in other
towns, vengeance had taken place of law,
though not perhaps of justice.

During these commotions in Paris and the
southern provinces, the chiefs of the revolters in

the departments of La Vendée and La Loire, so recently reconciled to the French government, again manifested a disposition to resume their arms, which they had with extreme reluctance consented ever to lay down. It is however probable that their submission, though involuntary, was sincere in the first instance, and that they were stimulated by the intrigues of the emigrants resident in England, and by the magnificent promises of the court of London, which, engaging to second their renewed efforts by a powerful descent upon the French coast, covered by a grand naval armament, fatally deluded these devoted victims of an interested and foreign ambition to their utter and remediless ruin. The vigilance of the deputies on mission in La Vendée, in the month of May, detected the correspondence which these persons carried on with the emigrants in England, and through them with the English ministry; and Comartin, with six other chiefs, were arrested on the evidence of intercepted letters. About the close of the same month, the Chouans began to embody in considerable force; and, while the royalists were forming arrangements in the interior of France, preparations were making in England for an invasion on the coast of Brittany, in which a very large body of the emigrants was to be employed. The person appointed to the command

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BOOK of this expedition was a M. Puisaye, a man who
 XXI. had been very unsteady in his political attach-
 1795. ments, and whose character stood impeached at
 the same time for want of courage and want of
 honesty. The second in command was M.
 D'Hervilly, an officer formerly high in rank in
 the French king's gardes-du-corps, and equally
 so in military reputation and general esteem.
 It was well understood that this romantic expe-
 dition, planned by M. Puisaye, in concert with
 the English cabinet, was by no means approved
 by M. D'Hervilly, who deemed nevertheless his
 honor engaged to embark himself and his for-
 tunes in this wild attempt. The count de Som-
 breuil also, a young man of uncommon talents,
 and of the most amiable disposition, was solicited
 by ministers, and consented, not without great
 reluctance likewise, to take a part in this
 Quixotic enterprize.

Disastrous
 expedition
 to La Ven-
 dée.

In the beginning of June the advanced guard
 of the army, consisting of between 4 and 5,000
 men, chiefly emigrants, were embarked in trans-
 ports, under the convoy of a squadron com-
 manded by sir John Borlase Warren. Previous
 to their departure, many thousand copies of a
 pastoral letter, written by the bishop of Dol,
 who also sailed in the fleet, were dispersed
 throughout the disaffected departments. It was
 printed in London; and amongst many asser-

tions equally abhorrent from good sense and rational policy were to be found in it the following marked expressions—" Que la même que DIEU est independant par lui-même et par sa nature, de même aussi le Roi est independant à l'égard de ses sujets, et sous les ordres de DIEU qui seul peut lui demander compte de l'usage qu'il fait de son autorité." After being sixteen days at sea, the fleet anchored between the Isle Dieu and that of Noirmoutier. The army of Charette was then very near; but it did not suit the views of M. Puisaye to join that chieftain, under whom he must have acted a comparatively insignificant part. On the 25th of June the fleet anchored in Quiberon-Bay. M. D'Hervilly went on shore by himself, and had some conversation with the inhabitants of the neighbouring village of Carnac; after which he determined that it would not be for the advantage of the service to make the descent in that place. But being over-ruled by the united opinions of sir John Warren and M. Puisaye, on the evening of the 26th the boats were manned, and at break of day the troops made good their landing near the village. Two or three hundred republican militia, assembled on the beach, at first made a shew of resistance, but they were easily routed, and fled towards Aurai—great demonstrations of joy being made for this success in

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the village and its vicinity. Large bodies of men, habited like peasants, came from different parts to see the army, pretending to partake in this premature triumph. To these persons the most profuse distribution of arms, of ammunition, and other necessities, was made, without any certificate of loyalty, or drawing any line of discrimination. In this way 28,000 musquets were said to be given, or rather thrown away, and other articles to an incredible amount.

The emigrant army was soon distributed into quarters of cantonment on shore, where they continued till the 2d of July. In this interval they were joined by some thousands of Chouans, who could not be restrained within any rules of discipline, and whose mode of warfare was wholly desultory and capricious. They attacked only by surprize, and dispersed whenever they were themselves assaulted by the regular troops, however great the disparity in number. After much altercation between Puisaye and D'Her-villy, it was at length determined to attack the fort of Quiberon, garrisoned by 600 republican troops, which surrendered with slight resistance; after which a resolution was taken to remove the army within the peninsula and fort, still retaining Carnac as an avancèd post. This was, however, immediately forced by the republican troops, now collecting in great numbers,

under the command of general Hoche, and the Anglo-emigrant army was shut up in the peninsula of Quiberon. From this period to the 15th the republicans were employed in constructing the most formidable works on the heights of St. Barbe; and every considerate person in the English army, now consisting of 12,000 men of all descriptions, was convinced of the necessity of a retreat. On the contrary, however, the remaining provisions and stores were landed from the transports upon the peninsula, as if it were a station perfectly tenable. On the night of the 15th a *sortie* was determined upon, and a detachment, consisting of near half the troops fit for service, marched to attack the entrenchments of St. Barbe. The republican troops were well prepared to receive them. After a feint of resistance they fell back to their entrenched camp, pursued by the English and emigrant troops in confidence of victory: but on a sudden a masked battery of grape-shot was opened upon them, which did inconceivable execution. Almost in a moment the whole army of the assailants was thrown into confusion, which in a very short time was converted into an absolute flight; and had not the fire from the British shipping stopped the progress of the republican columns, scarcely a man would have escaped. In this disastrous affair

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M. D'Hervilly was severely wounded, and from this time despair seized upon the minds of all. The emigrant regiments being recruited from the French prisons in England, great numbers had entered merely with the view of regaining their native country; and the desertions, which were from the first exceedingly prevalent, now increased to such a degree, that a single regiment, between the 15th and 20th of July, lost nearly 150 men.

During these transactions M. de Puisaye seemed to attend merely to his personal gratifications, living in all the state and luxury that his situation, as commander, admitted of; and as he was from the first the contempt, he now became the detestation, of the army; who, since the misfortune of M. D'Hervilly, had fixed their eyes upon the young and gallant Sombreuil as the only man in whom they could place their confidence. On the night of the 20th a dreadful storm blew from the west, accompanied with a deluge of rain; and the men who occupied the advanced posts were employed in seeking shelter from the inclemency of the weather, rather than in guarding against the approach of an enemy. In the mean time the republicans, conducted by a number of intelligent deserters, passing along the low and level shore of the peninsula, climbed the rocks without being disco-

vered, and attacked the fort before there arose the least suspicion of danger. M. Puisaye, on the first alarm, after directing M. Sombreuil, as that brave and unfortunate officer himself tells us, *to wait his orders*, took the singularly prudent precaution of hasting on board a ship which he secured for his retreat, abandoning his followers to their fate. Great numbers of the emigrants, amongst whom was the regiment of D'Hervilly, grounded their arms, and exclaimed "*Vive la République!*" The rest, animated by the example of the young Sombreuil, maintained an unequal and dreadful conflict. The Emigrants, English, and Chouans, in the fort, exceeded 10,000 strong, a vast majority of whom were either killed or taken prisoners; although the number of the assailants is stated at no more than 3,000 men. A few individuals passed in open boats, through a tempestuous sea, to the English squadron lying off the bay.

"A number of vessels," says M. Sombreuil, in the interesting letter addressed by him to sir John Warren (June 28) "that remained on the coast might have afforded me the disgraceful retreat which M. de Puisaye so vigilantly seized; but the dereliction of my companions in arms would have been far more shocking to me than the lot which awaits me. I am bold

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1795. to say I deserved a better fate; and this you will acknowledge, together with all those who know me, if chance will ever permit any of the companions of my misfortune to reveal to the world the mysteries of this fatal, this unexampled, day.—Farewel: I bid you farewel with that calmness which can alone result from purity of conscience.—In this last moment I derive a source of enjoyment, if any can be tasted in a situation like mine, from the esteem of my companions in misfortune, and that of the enemy by whom we are conquered. Farewel! Farewel! to all the world!”

Amongst the wretched captives who knew the fate which awaited them, were heard many voices pouring out execrations against those who had sent them thither in order to be sacrificed. The excellent, but unfortunately misguided Sombreuil, the bigoted but respectable bishop of Dol, with divers of his clergy who attended him, with most of the emigrant officers, were tried by a military tribunal, and shot; but with regard to the privates great lenity was shewn. Seventy thousand stand of arms, as reported to general Hoche, were taken, and magazines and clothing for 40,000 men. A considerable sum in specie became likewise the property of the captors, together with prodigious quantities of assignats, fabricated in Eng-

land, and issued under the mock authority of the infant monarch of France. Six ships that arrived the evening before the action laden with rum, brandy, and provisions, also fell into the hands of the republicans. Thus ended the visionary project of the British ministry for penetrating to the city of Paris on this side of the country. So long as La Vendée and the neighbouring departments were almost universally in arms against the republican government,—so long as their numerous armies, inspired with an heroic and invincible courage, determined to defend what to their darkened and deluded minds appeared to be the cause of God and their country,—no attempt was made on the part of the British ministers to succour and relieve them: but, as soon as their cause became utterly hopeless, they were by the most insidious arts inveigled to incur fresh dangers, and to expose themselves to the reproach of having violated their recent and solemn engagements; and thousands of their emigrant countrymen were sent to co-operate with them in this project of insanity and wickedness. The chiefs of the revolters, Charette and Stofflet, carried on for some months after this a desultory and desperate warfare, but were at length completely vanquished, and received the punishment of their demerits,—the former, with his dying

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{BOOK breath, venting curses upon the cabinet of
XXI. England.*

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Death of the Dauphin. it is necessary to mention, that the infant Ca-

* In remarking upon the conduct of the present war, the natural sagacity of Mr. Burke, the flaming and furious advocate of it, and who, in discussing its causes and its objects, is almost uniformly the slave of prejudice and passion, conspicuously discovers itself. He observes truly, "That a vast army might have been maintained in La Vendée at a far less expense than has been thrown upon tropical adventures. We should have had an ally in the heart of the country, who, at one time, would have added 80,000 men to whatever force we had sent thither, all animated by principle, by enthusiasm, and vengeance,—motives which secured them to the cause in a very different manner from some of those allies whom we subsidized with millions. Warring there, we should have led our arms to the capital of wrong; an impregnable rampart would have been formed between the enemy and his naval power. We are probably the only nation who have declined to act against an enemy when it might have been done in his own country; and who, having an armed, a powerful, and a long-victorious ally, in that country, declined all effectual co-operation, and suffered him to perish for want of support. Had we brought the main of our force to bear upon that quarter, all the operations of the British and Imperial crowns would have been combined; the war would have had system, correspondence, and a certain direction: but, as the war has been pursued, the operations of the two crowns have not the smallest degree of mutual bearing or relation." *Thoughts on a Regicide Peace*, p. 155.—Fortunately for France, the counsels of this Ahitophel were neglected; for which he would, in the opinion of many, have done well to follow the example of his prototype.

pet, only son of the late king, expired June 9, (1795) in the prison of the Temple, where he had been confined since the fatal 10th of August, 1792. His habit was sickly, and his ill health was probably increased by the want of proper exercise; but it does not appear that he suffered under any peculiar harshness of treatment. The princess, his sister and companion, was in a short time released, being exchanged with the court of Vienna for the deputies delivered up by the treachery of Dumouriez, and for the two ambassadors, Semonville and Maret, who had been basely seized on neutral ground, contrary to the law of nations, and detained prisoners by the Austrian government.

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The plan of the new constitution was presented by the Committee of Eleven, on the 23d of June, the report being made by Boissy D'Anglas. After much discussion, and various alterations, the Constitutional act was, on the 23d of August, declared complete, and referred to the primary assemblies for their approbation and acceptance. The principal features of this constitution were these:—The legislative power was vested in two councils, chosen through the medium of the electoral assemblies; the one consisting of 500, the other of 250, members. To the former, styled the Legislative Council, belonged the proposing,—to the latter, styled the Senate or

New con-
stitution of
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Council of Elders, the confirming, of laws ; and no person could be a member of the senate who had not completed his fortieth year—One-third of the members of each council to be re-chosen every year. The executive power was delegated to a DIRECTORY of five members, to be partially renewed by the election of one member in regular rotation. The mode of election was for the Council of Five Hundred to make out, by secret scrutiny, a list of ten persons, from which the senate by secret scrutiny also should select one. The judicial power to reside in judges of department and district, chosen by the electoral assemblies, and an high tribunal of appeal and cassation, or annulment, established by the same mode of election for the whole kingdom. This was certainly the outline of a free and noble constitution ; but the beneficial effect of it was entirely counteracted by one egregious and fatal error. The two councils were virtually rendered permanent, the Directory not being invested with the essentially necessary power of convening and proroguing those formidable bodies agreeably to its discretion ; and as the ministers of the executive government were, by another error of great though secondary magnitude, not admitted to seats in the legislative assemblies, an opposition of interests was instantly and inevitably created. The councils were irresistibly

tempted to encroach upon the functions of the executive power; and in effect two distinct governments were established by the same act. To this may be added, that the executive authority was much weakened by being committed to five persons, between whom differences and divisions might be expected to arise, instead of a single individual, under whatever name.

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On the 5th Fructidor (August 22), previous to the transmission of the Constitutional act to the primary assemblies, the Convention decreed that the elective bodies should, in appointing the deputies to the legislative body, choose two-thirds from amongst the members of the present Convention; and by another decree it was enacted, that, in default of such election, the Convention should fill up the vacancies themselves. These decrees formed a curious contrast to that famous self-denying ordinance of the Constituent Assembly, which prohibited the re-election of *any* of its members. The present Convention were probably impressed very strongly with the recollection of the ill effects resulting from that romantic though noble act of disinterestedness, and wandered into the opposite and less pardonable extreme. The decrees now past were obviously liable to the imputation of ambition and selfishness; but they were unquestionably deemed by many politically expedient, from the pre-

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dominance of Jacobinism in various parts of the country, and from the apprehension that, in consequence of the well-known activity and address of that fallen though still formidable party in popular elections, a majority of the Jacobin or Mountain faction would be returned members of the new legislature. It would, however, as the event proved, have been better and wiser to have acted upon the broad and simple principles of universal liberty ; for the Jacobins availed themselves with such dexterity of the discontent occasioned by this unexpected and unconstitutional restraint upon the public freedom of choice, that the whole nation was thrown into a state of confusion scarcely short of a temporary anarchy. The forty-eight sections of Paris, who had usually given the tone to the nation at large, while they unanimously accepted the Constitutional Act, as firmly rejected the law for the re-election of the two-thirds. In the majority of primary assemblies throughout the country, the decrees of the Assembly, having been transmitted to the departments with the Constitutional Act, were, in conjunction with the act, accepted and confirmed, notwithstanding the violence of the opposing party. But the sections of Paris, who had so often, in their outrageous proceedings, set all law and all government at defiance, after some insolent and unavailing applications to the

Convention to rescind the obnoxious decrees, proclaimed openly that means more forcible than mere remonstrances were necessary to bring the Convention to reason, and that they ought to be driven from their seats with ignominy. Several of the sections had already proceeded to open and daring acts of hostility. On the 12th Vendemaire (October 4), general Menou, commander of the military force of Paris, was sent to the chief place of their assembly, to disarm and disperse the insurgents: but this officer executed his commission so little to the satisfaction of the Convention, that he was severely reprehended, and Barras appointed in his room. In the dead of night the cry was heard—To ARMS! To ARMS! LIBERTY OR DEATH! and at the earliest dawn of day, the sections having drawn out their forces, intending to march them, as usual, to the hall of the Convention, a regular and bloody battle took place. The different avenues of the Tuilleries being planted with cannon, great slaughter was made amongst the insurgents, who repeatedly rallied, and returned to the charge with incredible obstinacy; but, being overpowered, they were, at the close of the day, and not till then, driven by the Conventional troops from all their posts, with the loss, as some accounts state, of five hundred, and others of no less than two thousand, men.

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The extreme violence of the opposition to the decrees of the Convention undoubtedly arose from the temporary junction, on this as on other occasions, of the royalist and Jacobin parties, aided by many well-meaning but mistaken persons, indignant at the flagrant violation of those abstract principles of liberty, which they attended to much more than their practical consequences, being thus in perpetual danger of sacrificing the end to the means. General principles of liberty are valuable only because they are generally beneficial: necessity may enforce, and then it will justify, a deviation, in particular cases, from those general principles;—if real, it is the plea of the patriot; if pretended, of the tyrant. Although the necessity of the decrees of Fructidor might previously be regarded as doubtful, yet, when once passed, all resistance to them by force was in the highest degree unjustifiable. These decrees might be productive of great national utility, in preventing the political evils too likely to result from a sudden transition of power; and no real danger to the state could, with any shadow of reason, be apprehended from them, when it was considered that one-third of the members of the Convention were to vacate their seats immediately, and another third at the expiration of one year after the establishment of the new constitution; and that the

Convention, as now constituted, had governed France with glory and success since the period of the fall of the tyrant Robespierre. The insurrection was confined to Paris; for some of the neighbouring communes were disarmed as they were on their march to join the sections. The Convention, now triumphant, declared that the majority of votes in the departments were in favor of the laws of Fructidor.

Alarmed, notwithstanding, at the spirit and strength of the opposition they had just overcome, many of the members seemed well inclined to postpone the establishment of the new constitution, and to continue for a certain time the revolutionary system. Some were even suspected of an intention to revive the reign of terror; and a committee of five members, M. Tallien being of the number, was actually appointed to consult on what measures should be adopted to *save the country*; but the consternation of the Assembly gradually subsided, and the patriotic boldness of a single individual had a great and happy effect: Thibeaudeau, the member alluded to, in an indignant speech, with energy protested that he would perish rather than survive the new tyranny which was preparing for his country. He demanded that the new commission should be immediately broken, and that the constitution should be the law of

BOOK the land on the day appointed. This declara-
XXI. tion, seconded by Lepaux, roused the Conven-
1795. tion to a just sense of what they owed to their
 fame and to their duty : the report of the com-
 mission for the permanence of the Assembly
 was rejected, and the commission itself an-
 nulled.

Dissolution
 of the Con-
 vention.

This Assembly concluded its sittings very nobly ; for the last decrees which it passed were for the abolition of the punishment of death at the return of peace, and for granting a general amnesty, though limited perhaps by too many exceptions : and on the 27th of October (1795), the day appointed by law, the president declared that “the NATIONAL CONVENTION WAS DISSOLVED.” Such was the extraordinary termination of an assembly, whose merits and demerits, whose glorious acts, and whose criminal excesses, will long be the theme of history. With a daring hand she signed the death-warrant of the successor of an hundred kings, and broke the sceptre which the superstition of fourteen centuries had consecrated. Standing greatly alone against a confederacy of crowned despots, she brought her armed myriads into the field, and compelled her enemies to flee with shame and confusion from the land which they had, in their vain and foolish imaginations, already conquered, and of which they were eager

to divide the spoils. But the magnanimity of this assembly was sullied by licentiousness, and contaminated by cruelty: their actions will excite the admiration of every age; and a distant posterity will perhaps pardon, while it deplures, their frailties and their faults.

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On the meeting of the new legislature, the first object was to elect the five members of the executive directory; and such was the impression made by the late violent and lawless proceedings, that the majority of the two councils were unfortunately disposed to elect ardent spirits, more distinguished by their courage and vigor than their wisdom and moderation, and who had formerly been accounted of, or inclined to, the Mountain party, though adverse to the tyranny of Robespierre, and friendly to the establishment of a free constitution. The highest upon the list was however Reveillière Lepaux, of the profession of the law, one of the Gironde deputies proscribed in consequence of the revolution of the 31st of May 1793. The next was Reubel, also of the law, who had lately been employed in negotiating the treaty with Holland. Letourneur de la Manche was the third: he had distinguished himself as a man of ability; his character was fair; and he had, previous to the revolution, acted as an officer of engineers. The fourth was Barras, formerly a

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viscount, and bred up from early life in the military service : he had the recent merit of suppressing the late dangerous insurrection ; and, in the preceding year, had also conducted with success the Conventional arms against the desperate efforts of the Robespierrean faction. The last upon the list was the celebrated Carnot, minister of war : he had been of the infamous Committee of Safety, during the reign of terror ; but he had entirely confined his attention to the business of his peculiar department, which he had conducted with such splendid success, that it was said of him, almost without a figure, “ that he had organised Victory, and rendered her permanent.”—Carnot was chosen upon a second ballot ; the profound and philosophic Sieyes, who was first nominated, with his characteristic caution, declining to take upon him the office. Next to Mirabeau, Sieyes was, by the most discerning judges, accounted the greatest and rarest genius which the revolution had as yet produced : he saw the radical defects of the new constitution too clearly to be willingly concerned in the execution of it, and reserved himself for more favorable and fortunate times. The palace of the Luxembourg was appointed for the residence of the executive power, and henceforth took the name of the Directorial Palace.

The miscellaneous occurrences of the preceding year, in relation to England, still remain to

be narrated. In the month of November 1794 a treaty of amity and commerce was signed by Mr. Jay and lord Grenville between the crown of Great Britain and the United States of America. This treaty, containing twenty-eight articles, was framed with remarkable caution, accuracy, and ability ; and on the part of England, at least, it was a very salutary and laudable measure : but it established certain provisions so injurious to France, that it may justly be doubted whether, on the part of America, the measure was either just, considering the treaty of alliance subsisting with that nation, and faithfully observed by it,—or politic, looking forward to the effects of the resentment it was calculated to excite. The French, whose commerce with the West Indies had been, since the commencement of the war, carried on chiefly through the medium of American vessels, saw with indignation the frequent seizures of their property by the English cruizers, in violation of the fundamental principle upon which the famous armed neutrality, during the last war, was founded, viz. that neutral bottoms make neutral goods. This principle had been recognized by France in her treaties of commerce, amity, and alliance, with America ; and they now justified their occasional deviations from it only by the necessity of following the example set by the

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Treaty of
commerce
signed be-
tween Great
Britain and
America.

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English, who were upon the whole, as being masters of the sea, much more profited by the breach than the observance of this liberal and equitable maxim. Hitherto, however, America had avowed, in the strongest terms, her adherence to the grand principle of the armed neutrality ; protesting against, and, as far as she was able, resisting the violation of it by either of the belligerent powers. But by the 12th, 17th, and 18th articles, of the treaty concluded by Mr. Jay, the States of America conceded, if not the right, at least the exercise of the right, claimed by Great Britain during the war, and for two years after;—coldly in respect to France, and complaisantly with regard to England, declaring, “ that at the expiration of this term the two contracting parties will endeavour further to regulate their commerce in this respect according to the situation in which his majesty the king of Great Britain may then find himself with respect to the West Indies ;” and, till the arrival of this uncertain period, even provisions are declared liable to seizure, on paying the value of the articles, with the additional expense of demurrage.

In return for this great concession, the court of London was profuse in her favors and acknowledgments. By the second article she agreed to evacuate all the forts within the bound-

ary-line assigned to the United States by the treaty of 1783. By the twelfth, the Americans were allowed to trade to the British West India islands in their own vessels, not exceeding seventy tons burden; and the thirteenth admitted them to a free participation of the British commerce in the East Indies. It was indeed by a mockery of friendship to France declared in the twenty-fifth article, that nothing in this treaty should be construed contrary to former and existing public treaties with other sovereigns or states; but as the spirit of this treaty was obviously and altogether in favor of the English, this affected adherence to the letter of the treaty with France was calculated only to add contempt to their resentment. The forts given up by Great Britain to America, by the second article of the treaty now concluded, were Niagara, Oswego, Detroit, Michillimakinac, and Miami, constructed in 1793; all of great importance for the command of the lakes, or restraining the inroads of the northern tribes of Indians. When the treaty reached America, it excited great astonishment, and no less contention. It was considered, by a great and respectable part of the continent, as an entire dereliction of amity with France, and as amounting to little less than a virtual declaration of war against her; laying unavoidably the foundation of great political

BOOK animosity in America, by dividing the people of
XXI. the United States into two great and hostile
 1795. factions, one attached to the Gallic, and the
 other to the Anglican, interest. When it was
 submitted by the president, agreeably to the
 forms of the constitution, to the senate, for their
 approbation, vehement debates took place ; and
 at length, tempted no doubt by the reciprocal
 concessions and advantages offered by England,
 the ratification of it was voted by a small major-
 ity. It has been upon high authority asserted,
 “ that the president, general Washington, on
 perceiving the treaty to be so little conformable
 to the instructions given to Mr. Jay, and so
 little consistent with what he deemed to be the
 interests of the United States, was long before
 he could prevail upon himself to present it to
 the senate for their sanction *.” When that
 sanction was given, however, he did not think
 it expedient or proper to withhold his own ; and
 the treaty was, in the end, formally ratified.

Defensive
 treaty be-
 tween Great
 Britain and
 Russia.

In the month of February 1795, a treaty of
 defensive alliance was concluded with the im-
 perial crown of Russia, containing some ex-
 traordinary stipulations, apparently not very
 beneficial to the interests of Great Britain. By
 the fourth and principal article of this treaty,

* Travels of the Duke de Liancourt in North America.

if the king of Great Britain is attacked or disturbed by any other power, her imperial majesty shall immediately send to his assistance ten thousand infantry and two thousand horse. On the other hand, if Russia is attacked by any European power, *even in Asia*, Great Britain shall immediately send to her assistance a squadron of twelve ships of the line, which shall remain in the Baltic from the beginning of May to the commencement of the month of October. The idea of sending a fleet to the assistance of Russia in the Baltic, in case the Turks or Tartars should invade her immensely-remote provinces bordering upon the Euxine or the Caspian, is so extravagant, that the real meaning of the empress, probably, was merely to take advantage of the presence of an English squadron in the north, in order to improve her own marine by imitating the example, and habituating the Russians to the practice of the skilful manœuvres, of the English ships and seamen.

It must not be omitted, that a session of parliament was held in the month of February at Corte, the ancient capital of Corsica, by sir Gilbert Elliot, the viceroy of that newly-acquired kingdom. His excellency communicated to them his majesty's gracious intentions to take upon himself the whole charges of their military establishment; and also declared, that they

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Parliament
held in
Corsica.

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1795. would have the benefit of a great naval force, without any expense. By his majesty's taking upon *himself* the charges and expense of the Corsican establishment, the viceroy doubtless meant no more than that his majesty would pledge himself for his faithful commons at Westminster: though, by the Constitutional Act, the island of Corsica was no more under subjection to Great Britain, *i. e.* to the British legislature, than to the Great Mogul. The viceroy, therefore, had reason on his side when he exhorted this assembly "to reflect on the advantages which they enjoyed, and which he truly observed were the exclusive privileges of the Corsican nation:"—there being certainly no other example in history of any government taking upon itself to defray the expenses of another government, which asserted, and was in actual possession of, the most perfect independency. His excellency also, with true Catholic devotion, informed the legislative body, "that a settlement of their religious establishment had been reserved for them, in concert with his holiness the Pope." At the close of this gracious speech, his excellency piously prayed, "that God would so bless and enlighten their counsels, as to render this first parliament of Corsica an example to all succeeding ones."—A petition as soon as uttered lost in empty air.

Early in the present year (1795), lord Amherst retiring full of years and honors from public life, his royal highness the duke of York was appointed commander-in-chief and field-marshal general of the forces of Great-Britain. The duke of Richmond was removed from his post of master of the ordnance, in which he was succeeded by earl, recently created marquis, Cornwallis; and sir William Howe was nominated, in the place of the latter nobleman, governor and lieutenant of the Tower of London.

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About the same time a petition was presented to the house of commons from the city of London, in common-hall assembled, deploring in strong terms the disastrous effects of the war. "Your petitioners conceive (say they) that none of the ends proposed by the present war either have been, or appear likely to be, obtained, although it has been carried on at an unprecedented expense to this country. Your petitioners, from their present view of public measures, presume humbly but firmly to express to this honorable house their decided conviction, that the principle upon which the war appears now to be carried on neither is nor can be essential to the prosperity, the liberty, or the glory, of the British empire. Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that this honorable house, disclaiming all right of interfering in the internal

Petitions
from the
cities of
London,
York, Nor-
wich, &c.
against the
war.

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concerns of France, will be pleased to take such measures as they in their wisdom shall think proper for the purpose of promoting a speedy peace."—The cities of York, Norwich, and some others, followed the example of London; but these petitions were not sufficiently general to produce any very sensible effect; and counter-petitions were obtained by the partizans of ministry, in which a confident reliance was expressed on the *wisdom* of the government to set on foot, at the proper period, such negotiations as might lead to the restoration of peace.

Disturb-
ances in the
city of
Westmin-
ster.

In the month of July some serious riots, continuing for several successive days, took place in London, occasioned by the discovery of some shameful practices which had been long prevalent, but which were subsequently and effectually reformed by the excellent regulations of the present royal commander-in-chief, of inveigling men into his majesty's service. Emboldened by the little opposition they met with, the populace, who had long shewn a marked aversion to Mr. Pitt, conceiving, upon no rational ground, that he had authorized or countenanced these abuses, repaired to his house in Downing-street, the windows of which they demolished, and were proceeding to further violence, when they were informed that the affrightened minister had escaped by the park-gate to

the Horse-Guards; and on the arrival of the military they were, not without some difficulty, at length dispersed.

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The forgotten business of the *Pop-gun Plot*, as it was generally and ludicrously styled, was revived in the autumn of this year; and one Crossfield, a surgeon, who had been for some time a prisoner in the town of Brest, was apprehended on suspicion of being concerned in this dark conspiracy. It appeared, on examination before the privy-council, that this man, whose intercourse with the other plotters, Higgins, Smith, and Le Maitre, was proved by the testimony of the infamous informer Upton, had boasted (probably hoping to ingratiate himself with the Jacobins with whom he was surrounded, and contrary to truth) that he had been accused of being concerned in this affair; and affected to drop some mysterious expressions relating to it. Crossfield was upon this sent, by warrant of the privy-council, to the Tower; and Higgins, Smith, and Le Maitre, were re-committed, and at length, with Crossfield, brought to trial; when, upon a full investigation of the evidence on the part of the crown, which amounted to little more than vague and contradictory hear-says, the prisoners were acquitted by verdicts which gave universal satisfaction. It nevertheless appears by no means improbable, that some loose and

Pop-gun
plot revived.

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Popular
meetings at-
tended by
vast multi-
tudes at
Chalk-
Farm, &c.

licentious discourse had passed amongst them as to the practicability of succeeding in such a romantic and criminal attempt.

Great apprehensions had been excited in the course of the year by divers assemblages of the populace, convened very improperly, if not illegally, by the Corresponding Society, which still regularly continued its meetings. The most remarkable of these was on the 26th of October, in a field near Copenhagen-House, in the vicinity of the village of Pancras. The number here convened did not, as was supposed, amount to less than 40,000 persons; whose conduct, notwithstanding, upon this occasion, was decent and orderly. But where multitudes are collected, mischief may always be reasonably feared. Some of the orators of the society harangued the populace; and an address and remonstrance to his majesty being unanimously voted, they dispersed peaceably to their respective homes.

END OF VOLUME IX.



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VOLUME THE NINTH.

VOLUME THE NINTH.


APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

STATE PAPERS AND AUTHORITIES,

TO THE

NINTH VOLUME.



ON THE ORIGIN OF THE WAR OF 1793-1802.

IT is a question of great historical moment, to ascertain in what causes the late war between England and France, unparalleled in its expenditure of blood and treasure, and still more so, in the dreadful magnitude of its consequences, ORIGINATED. If it was, politically speaking, unavoidable on the part of Great Britain, the administration of that period have suffered much unmerited obloquy, from which they ought to be publicly vindicated. If, on the other hand, they had it in their power, much more if the means were easy and obvious, to preserve the nation from an evil so dreadful, it is the duty and the province of history to hold them up to general contempt as the most incapable, if not to general indignation as the most criminal, of statesmen.*

* The present dissertation contains the substance of the arguments used by the author, in a controversial discussion respecting the origin of the war, with the Rev. Herbert Marsh, in consequence of the work published by that gentleman, styled "History of the Politics of GREAT BRITAIN and FRANCE, &c," in two volumes 8vo.

That in the month of August, in the year 1791, a conference took place at Pilnitz, in Saxony, between the emperor Leopold and the king of Prussia, which terminated in an agreement or convention, purporting designs in the highest degree alarming to France, is acknowledged. Upon the decisive evidence of M. de Bouille, and M. de Moleville, it is certain that the project of the emperor and king was nothing less than to form a league between all the powers of Europe, in order to compel the French nation to submit to such conditions as those powers might think fit to impose. To this league Great Britain, much to the honour of its government, and to the disappointment of the combined courts, refused to accede ; and in relation to this famous intended general coalition, as well as in other respects, she appears to have acted a part rather friendly than inimical to France.

During the dreadful state to which the island of St. Domingo was reduced towards the close of the summer of 1791, in consequence of the insurrection of the negroes, the town of Cape François being surrounded by an army of the insurgents, the most seasonable and effectual relief was afforded to the inhabitants, by the generosity of lord Effingham, governor of Jamaica ; and the British ambassador at Paris notified to the court of France, his Britannic majesty's approbation of this proceeding.

To the circular letter written by the king of France, September 1791, to announce his acceptance of the new constitution, the court of London replied early, and in terms of respect and friendship ; while Sweden returned the letter unopened ; and Spain gave for answer, that the act of acceptance could not be regarded as an act of free will.

On the 31st of January, 1792, the session of parliament was opened by a speech from the throne, indicative of a truly pacific spirit, and even recommending some immediate reductions in the naval and military

establishments, which accordingly took place: and Mr. Pitt was sanguine enough to affirm the probability of fifteen peaceful years in uninterrupted succession.

Upon the 20th of April (1792), war was declared by France against Austria; on which great occasion England still maintained its professions of neutrality; with the sincerity of which the French ambassador, M. Chauvelin, appears to have been perfectly satisfied. "War," says the ambassador in his dispatches, "is not agreeable to the taste of the nation; preparations are neither made in the ports or the arsenals. It is certain, that the system of neutrality *debated* in council was adopted there." So strongly were the new ministers of France, M. Roland and his colleagues, persuaded of the favourable disposition of the English nation, and even of the English court at this period, that the king of France was advised by them to write (May 1st) a confidential letter to the king of England, thanking that monarch "for all the marks of affection he had given him, and especially for not having become a party to the concert formed by certain powers against France." The letter then proceeds to touch upon topics of the most important and interesting nature, and refers to the secret instructions given to the ambassador. "Between our two countries," says the French monarch, "new connexions ought to take place. I think I see the remains of that rivalry which has done so much mischief to both, daily wearing away. It becomes two kings who have distinguished their reigns by a constant desire to promote the happiness of their people, to connect themselves by such ties as will appear to be durable, in proportion as the two nations shall have clearer views of their own interests. I consider the success of the alliance in which I wish you to concur with as much zeal as I do, as of the highest importance. I consider it as necessary to the stability of the respective constitutions, and the internal tranquillity of our two kingdoms; and

and I will add, that our union ought to **COMMAND PEACE to EUROPE.**"

Never did a more glorious opportunity present itself, of advancing to an height before unknown, and of establishing on a broad and solid basis the great and permanent interests of mankind. Had the alliance so earnestly sought by France, been acceded to with equal sincerity and good will on the part of Great Britain, how incalculable are the mischiefs which might, and in all human probability would, have been prevented: how immense the benefits which must have accrued! To this truly noble and generous overture, *no answer was given*. An alarming indication, that a new spirit had arisen in the English councils. Yet in the course of the same month, the English court issued, at the requisition of the ambassador, Chauvelin, a proclamation to enforce the amicable stipulations of the treaty of 1786, prohibiting the subjects of England from taking out, or accepting any commissions from the princes or states actually at war with France. This was highly gratifying to the French government; and in a note presented by M. Chauvelin at this period, on occasion of the proclamation against seditious writings, he says, "Independently of those principles of justice, from which a free people ought never to depart, if any one is solicitous to reflect candidly on the true interests of the French nation; is it not evident that they must be anxious for the internal peace, and the stability and duration of the constitution of a country which they already look upon as a natural ally?" On the 15th of June, 1792, the session ended, when the king renewed the protestations of his care to maintain the harmony and good understanding which subsisted between him and the several belligerent powers, and to preserve to his people the uninterrupted blessings of peace.

So eager was the government of France at this crisis, to conciliate the favour and friendship of England, that

notwithstanding the late repulse, the king of France, by advice of his present virtuous and patriotic ministers, ordered M. Chauvelin to present, June 18, a memorial to the English minister for foreign affairs, requesting the mediation of the king of England between France and the allied powers. "The consequences," said the ambassador, "of such a conspiracy, formed by the concurrence of powers who have been so long rivals, will be easily felt by his Britannic majesty : the balance of Europe, the independence of the different powers, the general peace ; every consideration which at all times has fixed the attention of the English government, is at once exposed and threatened. The king of the French presents these serious and important considerations to the solicitude and friendship of his Britanic majesty. Strongly penetrated with the marks of interest and affection which he has received from him, he invites him to seek in his wisdom, in his situation, and in his influence, means compatible with the independence of the French nation, to stop while it is still time, the progress of the confederacy formed against her," &c.

After a lengthened and tedious interval of twenty days, a cold and evasive answer was returned by the English court, importing, "that in the *existing circumstances* of the war now begun, his majesty thinks the intervention of his counsels or of his good offices, cannot be of any use, unless they should be desired by all the parties interested," &c.

But it is not to be imagined, that in the *existing circumstances* of the case, Austria and Prussia would have dared to refuse the mediation of Great Britain. The interests of this country were evidently and closely interwoven with those of the Continent, which seemed to look up to England as the arbitress of its fate. But the genius of Mr. Pitt did not rise to a level with the proud pre-

eminence in which he, his king, and his country, were at this critical moment placed.

England was at all times well known to be more favourably disposed to the house of Austria than to France. The application of France to England, therefore, shewed the confidence she placed in the justice of her cause, and her readiness to acquiesce in any fair and equitable terms of reconciliation. Had the pride and obstinacy of Austria rendered the mediation of England ineffectual, she might properly have left the Imperial court to the consequences of its folly ; and would by this means have acquired an irresistible claim upon France for conceding the neutrality of the low countries ; the preservation of which from the Gallic power, was the only good political reason for involving this country in the continental war.

In consequence of the wise and conciliatory conduct of sir Robert Walpole in the war of 1735, this point was attained without difficulty ; and the court of Vienna clamoured in vain for the assistance of Great Britain to extricate her from the distressing embarrassments occasioned by her own rashness and presumption. The power of this country is indeed very great, when wisely directed, and to proper objects ; and her mediation, when offered in the spirit of candour and good will, must ever carry with it peculiar weight. But the administration of Mr. Pitt has been distinguished by the spirit of haughtiness. No minister ever challenged the confidence of the country in a tone so lofty ; no minister ever expressed himself with respect to France, in terms of such insolence and contumely ; no minister, when engaging in a war with that potent enemy, ever before countenanced the puerile idea of marching to the gates of Paris ;—yet was this minister the only statesman having the direction of the affairs of England since the power of France became formidable under the auspices of Richelieu and Mazarine, who failed

in his attempts to defend the low countries from the designs of Gallic ambition.

To revert from this digressional remark to the chain of political events during this memorable year. On the deposition of the king of France, August 10, 1792, orders were almost immediately sent to earl Gower, the English ambassador at Paris, and who had displayed much good sense and discretion during his embassy, to withdraw from that city and return forthwith to England; therein virtually taking a decided part in the interior concerns of France, casting a stigma upon the conduct of the national assembly, and dissolving the most direct and important medium of communication with that country, at a time when the political relation of the two nations became more than ever interesting and momentous. Whether the national assembly were or were not justifiable in the measure of deposition, the English government could possess no right of jurisdiction over them: and the political necessity of maintaining an intercourse of amity and good offices, was at least as urgent as before. France probably was to be saved only by proceeding to this extremity; and what political merit had Louis XVI. in relation to England, that the English government should interest itself in the perpetuation of his power? Why incur any political risques in opposing the downfall of a monarchy which had shewn itself uniformly hostile to Britain? Surely the new order of things could not be worse in this respect than the old! of whatever private virtues the king might be possessed, he inherited all the political vices at least of his ancestors. And that minister must be actuated by strange predilections, who would willingly engage in a war, for the purpose of re-establishing the former despotism of the house of Bourbon in France.

But the recall of the ambassador was necessarily productive of the highest political inconvenience. It was an unprovoked and flagrant insult to the French nation;

and it was by all persons of political discernment in both countries regarded as ominous of future animosity, contention, and war ; occasioning, as it did, a mighty shock to the feelings of that high-spirited and gallant people, who carry to a pitch which borders even upon the romantic, their ideas of the point of honour. “ The suspension of the king of the French,” says M. Brissot, in his famous report of the 12th January, 1793, “ on a sudden changed the apparent disposition of the English court. On the 17th of August she recalled her ambassador, under the futile pretext, that his letters of credence were addressed only to the monarch ; as if new letters of credence could not have been expedited. The minister, Dundas, added, that this recall was perfectly conformable to the principles of neutrality adopted by the English court, and her firm resolution not to interfere in the internal government of France. Nevertheless, the ambassador was recalled upon the ground of the revolution of the 10th of August. Was not this an interference in the interior concerns of France, since it involved in it a public disapprobation of its operations ? If the cabinet of England had entertained a just respect for the independence of the Gallic nation, an ambassador would at least have been sent at the opening of the convention. For when all the departments had named deputies to this convention, it was evident that a formal sanction was given to the preceding measures of the national assembly, and consequently to the suspension of the king. Did the cabinet of St. James’s found its refusal upon the abolition of royalty, pronounced by this convention at the commencement of its sittings ? We answer, that the convention was invested with unlimited powers ; and that it had a right to abolish royalty, and to substitute a republican government in its place. The cabinet of St. James’s could not refuse to correspond with the new executive power established in France, without violating the principle which she had herself proclaimed respect-

ing the independence of nations ; without declaring their determination to interfere with the internal concerns of France. Disdaining, nevertheless, these frivolous diplomatic chicaneries, and conceiving that the repose of nations ought not to be sacrificed to the miserable disputes of etiquette ; hoping all things from time, reason, and victory, the French republic ordered her ambassador in London still to exercise his functions."

In the instructions transmitted to lord Gower upon this occasion, it must be remarked that his lordship was directed "to take especial care in all the conversation which he might have occasion to hold before his departure, not to neglect any opportunity of declaring, that at the same time his majesty means to observe the principles of neutrality in every thing which regards the arrangement of the internal government of France." On reading this instruction, who can avoid exclaiming, why then depart at all ? If it were the real intention of the British court to maintain its neutrality, why adopt a measure so invidious, and which necessarily put that neutrality so much to the hazard ?

The French executive government, upon their part, on this trying occasion displayed very signal proofs of temper and wisdom. "The council," says M. Le Brun, minister of foreign relations, in his reply to the official notification of lord Gower, "hath seen with regret, the determination of the English cabinet to recall its ambassador, whose presence attested the favourable dispositions of a free and generous nation, and who had never been the organ of any other than amicable words and sentiments of benevolence. If any thing can diminish this regret, it is the renewal of the assurance of the neutrality given by England to the French nation. This assurance appears to be the result of the intention wisely reflected upon, and formally expressed by his Britannic majesty, not to interfere in the interior arrangement of the affairs

of France. Such a declaration cannot be surprising on the part of the people, enlightened and spirited, who first of all nations recognized and established the principle of the national sovereignty ; who substituting the empire of the law, the expression of the will of all, to the arbitrary caprices of individual wills, was the first to give the example of subjecting kings themselves to that salutary yoke ; who, in fine, hath not deemed herself to have purchased too dear by long convulsions, and violent tempests, that liberty to which she owes her glory and prosperity. This principle of the inalienable sovereignty of the people is now going to manifest itself in a strong manner in the national convention, of which the legislative body has decreed the convocation, and which will fix without doubt, all parties and all interests. The French nation has ground to hope, that the British cabinet will not depart in this decisive moment, from the justice, the moderation, and the impartiality, which have hitherto characterized her proceedings."

But notwithstanding the hollow neutrality of words contradicted by her own public act, on the part of the English court, and the magnanimous acceptance of that fallacious neutrality on the part of the executive council, the prevailing opinion in France from this time really was, that England would ultimately join the coalition* :

* With respect to the impression actually made by the revocation of lord Gower, we are informed by Mr. O'Bryen, who was at Paris shortly after this event had taken place, that M. Brissot declared in his presence, " that he never despaired of the duration of the peace with England, until the recall of the English ambassador ; that the French were well aware of the hostile disposition of the English ministry from the beginning of the revolution ; they had hopes, however, that the unprovoked injustice of such a measure, would prevent the accession of England to the coalition ; but the recall of the ambassador, and sending no one to replace him, was too clear an explanation of the Hanoverian minister's conduct at the diet of Ratisbon, who appeared more as a factor for the duke of Brunswick's army, than the envoy of a power which had repeatedly promised its neutrality."—*Œconomus*, p. 43.

and those who were most adverse to the idea of a rupture with that power, thought it necessary to prepare the public mind for what they conceived to be so probable an event.

This they endeavoured to do in divers ways: *First*, By depreciating the power of England, and representing that in consequence of her immense debt, she would not be able to exert her native force with the same effect she had heretofore done. Nay, that a war would soon bring on a crisis in her finances, and that a national bankruptcy must inevitably ensue. *Secondly*, By magnifying the discontent and disaffection which were known to exist in a certain degree in that kingdom, and by plain intimations and even assertions, that in case of a war, it would be easy to excite a formidable insurrection in England, which would probably terminate in the subversion of kingly government.

In making these assertions, M. Brissot, and other popular orators in the convention, were doubtless in some measure deceived themselves, and from motives which appeared in their view highly patriotic, they evidently scrupled not the practice of various arts to deceive others. If they conceived that they had it in their power to excite an insurrection, which M. Le Brun and other persons high in office, probably might imagine, it does not follow that they seriously expected this insurrection to terminate in the subversion of kingly government in England. On the contrary, it was manifest beyond all possibility of question, that the adherents of the established form of government, were incomparably more numerous and powerful than the jacobins and republicans. An insurrection on the part of the mal-contents, therefore, could ultimately operate, as the French government indubitably saw, only to their own ruin. And though we are not at liberty to suppose that the French government entertained agents in England, with a view to excite public disturb-

ances, for this plain reason, because none such have ever been detected, yet in all probability, like *lawful and regular governments*, they had their spies and reporters, who might sometimes mislead them, as lawful and regular governments have been sometimes misled.

What good or plausible motive can be assigned why France should not have been as well disposed to maintain the relations of peace and amity with Great Britain as with Denmark, Sweden, and America, had she conceived that Britain was amicably disposed towards her? In fact, as long as there was the least chance of retaining the friendship, or even the neutrality of England, France shewed herself eager to cherish a close connexion with the British crown; and it was not till she conceived her advances to be slighted, and her government insulted, that she displayed any symptoms of resentment.

But it is not easy, in adopting a subtile and refined system of policy, to draw the line accurately and precisely. Brissot and his colleagues so frequently asserted "that it was the interest of France to engage in a general war;"—"that the revolution could be completed and perfected only by such a war;"—"that the governed must be incited against the governor;"—"that France, for her own safety, must set fire to the four corners of the world," &c. &c. that many were seriously of opinion, that this ought to be effected; and the spirit of jacobinism soon began, even under the Brissotine administration, which it shortly afterwards superseded and overturned, to appear very formidable. Many violently patriotic members of the convention aspired to the glory of revolutionizing England, and from the combined influence of the causes so repeatedly stated to them, they thought little of the danger attending it: and there were those who hesitated not to affirm, that England was no more to be dreaded than the republic of Ragusa.

In this dangerous and highly fermented state of the

public mind, the *patriotic societies* in England began the practice of presenting at the bar of the convention, addresses of congratulation, filled with bold, insolent, and seditious expressions, to which answers were returned in a congenial spirit, full of respect and complacency. After the decisive victory of Gemappe, and the concomitant successes of the French armies in Germany and Italy, the licentious enthusiasm of that democratic and anarchic body, knew no bounds; and the famous decree of the 19th November, 1792, granting fraternity, and promising assistance to all those people who wished for liberty, passed by acclamation. On the 28th of the same month, the president of the convention, M. Gregoire, in reply to a seditious address from England, went the violent and extreme length of declaring, "that the moment without doubt approached, in which the French would bring congratulations to the national convention of Great Britain."

No sooner had this intelligence reached England, than a resolution was taken, in the stead of reinstating lord Gower as ambassador, and authorizing him to remonstrate with energy against these extravagancies, which most assuredly would never have been committed, had he remained in his proper station, immediately to convoke the parliament, and to state to *them* in the first instance, instead of the French government, all the causes of grievance. The parliament accordingly met December 13th, in a most unusual time and manner, and every artifice was put in practice by the ministers, and but too successfully, to excite a national alarm. Parliament summoned, no one could tell why—the militia called out to fight, no one could tell whom—a plot against the government, no one could tell what—an explosion hourly expected, no one could tell where—the stocks falling, the Tower fortifying; meetings here, addresses there, sound and fury in the debates of the two houses; Mr. Fox's counsels contemned, and Mr. Burke deemed an oracle of wisdom!

The speech from the throne contained a formal denunciation of the French, whose conduct had indeed by this time afforded just and weighty grounds of complaint. The decree of November, the opening of the Scheld, the annexation of Savoy, in opposition to the pretended renunciation of conquest ; the reception given to the English addresses by the convention ; were all legitimate subjects of reclamation and remonstrance. But neither reclamation nor remonstrance was made to the government of France. As a measure of national security and prevention, an augmentation of the naval and military force of the kingdom was voted. The alien bill, the bill for preventing the circulation of assignats, for prohibiting the exportation of arms and military stores to France, and even, in direct and acknowledged defiance of the commercial treaty, of foreign corn through the medium of England—a measure against which, M. Chauvelin remonstrated in terms of great energy—were passed ; being carried through their several stages by great and decisive majorities in both houses.

These measures were not of a nature to pass unnoticed in the national convention of France. So early as the 15th December, and as soon as England had begun to shew herself decidedly hostile, the principles of jacobinism still rapidly gaining ground in that assembly, a decree passed, “ that in those countries which are, *or shall be* occupied by the armies of the French republic, the generals shall immediately proclaim in the name of the French nation, the sovereignty of the people, and the abolition of all constituted authorities, &c. The truth is, that the French universally conceived the confederacy, or as they rather chose to style it, the conspiracy formed against them, to be in the highest degree base and unjust. They regarded it not without some colour of reason, as a war resolved upon for the express purpose of subverting the infant liberty of France, of dismembering its provinces,

and of restoring amongst them the reign of despotism. The majority, therefore, thought they were fully justified in defending themselves as they could, and in repelling so unprovoked an aggression, by attacking their enemies in the part wherein they were the most vulnerable. As it was a war against liberty on the part of the combined despots, so on the part of France it was considered as a war against despotism, which was to be conducted upon principles totally different from those which had been known or acted upon in any former war; and if England joined the coalition of despots, they meant no doubt to class her as she classed herself.

When M. Baraillon, known as a professed *modéré* and real royalist, therefore proposed to the convention, to restrict the meaning of the decree of the 19th November, to the countries with which France was actually at war, because it had excited uneasiness in the British government; the previous question was immediately demanded upon it, and the proposition virtually negatived without a debate, as insidiously designed.

Though an oblique threat to England might doubtless be intended by the framers of the decree of the 15th of December, the language of the decree itself, amicably, or even equitably construed, bore no such construction. The preamble to this famous decree contains the following words: "The national convention, faithful to the principles of the sovereignty of the people, which does not permit them to acknowledge any institution that militates against it, decrees, &c." But the sovereignty of the people had been repeatedly recognized since the establishment of the new order of things in France, as perfectly consistent with the principles of the English constitution; nay, as necessarily implied in that constitution, unless the revolution of 1688 were no other than a rebellion, the act of settlement a nullity, and king William, with the monarchs of the house of Brunswick, vile and lawless

usurpers. And it is remarkable, that M. Le Brun, in his late excellent answer to lord Gower's notification of recall, expressly styles the English nation, "Un peuple éclairé et fier, qui le premier a reconnu et établi le principe de la souveraineté nationale."

In reference to the decree in question, therefore, it is absolutely necessary to bear constantly in mind, that as the war against France was waged for the express purpose of restoring the ancient despotism, and of subverting the infant freedom of the republic, the French government deemed themselves fully justified, in avowing their intention of destroying the oppressive tyrannies of those who had joined in the flagitious confederacy against them. And if Great Britain, after the torrents of blood she had shed in defence of her own liberties, chose to rank herself with those despots who had combined to destroy the liberty of France, she might certainly infer from this decree, that France would make no exceptions in her favour. As long as England preserved any appearance of amity to France, she was invariably spoken of, not merely in terms of respect, but frequently of flattery and admiration; and if England had not been conscious of the hostile mind she bore to France, she would never have supposed herself included in the scope either of the present decree or the preceding one of November.

The conduct of the executive council, in the critical circumstances they were now placed in, was throughout temperate and laudable. M. Le Brun, in his report to the convention of the 19th of December, declared, "that there was nothing in the English armaments which ought to excite alarm, since they exceeded by four ships of the line only, the number which had been commissioned in the preceding year. And some days after, when thirteen more ships of the line were put into commission, he still affirmed, that the force voted by the English parliament was not formidable, *ne sont pas encore trop effrayans*;

considering, as he added, the difficulty of completing the crews of these vessels for want of mariners. He affirmed, that the council had given express orders to the minister, Chauvelin, to embrace every opportunity of assuring the English nation, that notwithstanding the ill-humour of its government, the French people desired nothing more ardently than to merit its esteem. Also, that in case the armament to which he had alluded should be continued, M. Chauvelin had instructions to declare, that a solemn appeal would be made to the English nation."

"An appeal," as M. Brissot afterwards professed to explain it, to the reason and justice of a great nation, duped by the *charlatanisme* of its minister; and he expressed his surprise, that the English court should affect to regard it as an incitement to insurrection." A similar instance of appeal had occurred in the famous declaration of count Palm, the Imperial ambassador, in the year 1726, which excited indeed, a just resentment of the court of London, though it was not regarded as "an incitement to insurrection." But on farther reflection, the governing powers of France wisely abstained from carrying this very obnoxious and exceptionable measure into execution.

After an interval of no less than fourteen days from the meeting of parliament, M. Chauvelin was at length ordered to break silence; and on the 27th of December he presented a note or memorial to lord Grenville, minister for foreign affairs, which offered certainly a very fair opening for an amicable termination of the fatal misunderstanding which had now taken place between Great Britain and France*. In this letter the offensive meaning of the decree of the 19th of November, is formally and expressly disavowed. The question with a great statesman,

* On account of the length of the correspondence between M. Chauvelin and lord Grenville, the reader must necessarily be referred to the original letters, to be found in the collection of state papers published in illustration of the present history.

if such an one had fortunately for Britain presided over her councils at this period, would doubtless have been, not whether the explanation offered by M. Chauvelin, was a just interpretation, according to the ordinary rules of grammatical construction; not whether the comment was proof against all captious criticism, but whether the public and unequivocal disavowal of its supposed meaning did not indicate a real reluctance on the part of France to come to a rupture with England? whether she did not still wish to reinstate matters on the footing of friendship; or, if that were impracticable, at least of civility and neutrality? If France really purposed to break with England, it is the grossest of solecisms to believe that she would have degraded herself by this poor and paltry evasion. No, the decree in question was evidently the unpremeditated effusion of popular exultation and folly; it passed by acclamation in a moment of enthusiasm and victory; and with respect to countries which maintained the relations of peace and amity with France, it never had or was designed to have the remotest operation.

The pacific disposition of France is farther evidenced by her positive and voluntary declaration, that she will not attack Holland, if that power does not violate its neutrality. Lastly, by professing to treat the opening of the Scheldt as a *trivial question*, the memorial furnished a ready salvo for the honour of the French government, if in the progress of the negotiation it should be found expedient to concede that point to England. Weighed in the great political scale of Europe, the free navigation of the Scheldt was indeed a consideration of trivial moment; and were the present negotiation conducted in the spirit of amity, it might with almost absolute certainty be inferred, that France would not suffer this claim to be an insuperable bar to the successful termination of it.

The uncourteous and uncustomary language respecting ministers, is indeed reprehensible; and the oblique threat

of appealing to the English nation against the part adopted by its government, or those entrusted to administer it, is equally impolitic and indefensible. The English ministry were at this time, in consequence of their own previous and egregious indiscretion, involved, as it must be confessed, in a situation of great political difficulty; and the negotiation now entered upon was at once one of the most important and delicate that could be conceived. And never was there a minister less qualified than lord Grenville, to conduct and bring to a successful issue a business of such embarrassment and complexity; and which would have afforded full scope to the highest exertion of diplomatic talents—to the address, the urbanity, the superior wisdom of a Temple, a De Witt, or a Bolingbroke.

On the 31st December lord Grenville returned an answer to the memorial of M. Chauvelin, in which not the smallest particle of these requisite qualities is discernible; but the whole is couched in terms of the most studied irritation and insolence. This haughty and incapable minister, uniformly affects to consider the French as the original aggressors in the continental war: he makes not the least allowance for that perturbed state of the public mind, which so singular and perilous a situation as that in which they lately stood, must necessarily have excited: he puts the worst possible construction upon the decree: he takes it for granted that England was included in the scope of it, and refuses to admit any explanation which might tend to remove or rectify whatever umbrage had been occasioned by it*.

* This famous decree, in the original language, is as follows:

Séance du Lundi, 19 Novembre, 1793.

Lepeaux propose, et la convention adopte la rédaction suivante, "LA CONVENTION NATIONALE déclare au nom de la nation Française qu'elle accordera fraternité et secours à tous les peuples qui voudront recouvrir leur liberté; et charge le pouvoir exécutif de donner aux généraux les ordres né-

The impolitic conduct of England, in refusing to recognize the provisional government of France, so far as to continue the accustomed diplomatic relations subsisting between the two countries, was regarded by the majority of the convention as a renunciation of the principle of neutrality, and an actual interference in the interior concerns of the French nation; and the English government was in consequence treated upon many occasions, in that assembly, with great rudeness and indignity. This false step was, therefore, as soon as possible to be retrieved. M. Chauvelin ought to have been acknowledged as the accredited minister of the French government, and an ambassador immediately sent to Paris. This of itself would have given a totally new face to things, and have produced a great sensation in favour of England. But, on the contrary, lord Grenville embraced with eagerness the present occasion to tell M. Chauvelin, in the most offensive terms, "that he could not be admitted to treat with the king's ministers in the quality, and under the form, stated in his note."

Instead of accepting, with magnanimous indifference to verbal criticisms, the political explanation and apology of M. Chauvelin relative to the decree of November, as was the part of a wise and liberal negotiator, avoiding all retrospect, and looking forward only to future arrangements of amity, lord Grenville chose to avail himself of the petty advantage he possessed, in pointing out the real or supposed inadequacy of the explanation to the terms of the decree; putting, moreover, a most harsh and unwarrantable interpretation upon the explanation itself.

cessaires pour porter secours à ces peuples, et défendre les citoyens qui auraient été vexé ou qui pourraient l'être pour la cause de la liberté."

This decree could not, with any plausibility of construction, be supposed to extend to England, which had repeatedly, and in the most flattering terms, been recognized, both by the several assemblies and the executive government, as a free nation, particularly in the recent and admirable reply of Le Brun to the letter of lord Gower, notifying his recall.

He thought it expedient, also, to allude in the most invidious manner, in this moment of amicable ecclaireissement, to the most invidious proceedings of the convention—proceedings which he knew that the executive council could not controul; and what is most of all extraordinary, his lordship declares, that England must not only consider the explanation, *i. e.* the disavowal of France, as unsatisfactory, but as a fresh avowal of those dispositions which she sees with so just an uneasiness and jealousy.

The opening of the Scheld being a secondary consideration in the present state of things, it would have been far better to have passed it over in general terms, reserving the diplomatic *discussion* of right on this topic to a season of more leisure, and better temper. Instead of which, lord Grenville urges his argument respecting this matter at great length, and in language the most insulting. And he sums up the demands of England in a tone of the most insufferable arrogance. “If France is really,” says his lordship, “desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory,” &c.

If this means any thing, it must import that France, in order to maintain friendship, or even to preserve peace, with England, must relinquish her conquests in the low countries, and elsewhere; a proposition too extravagant to become the topic of serious deliberation. It is true, that the national assembly had established the renunciation of conquest as the basis of the new system; but even that body of philosophical legislators, in their most romantic visions of political perfectibility, could never intend to restrain the French nation, while war was actually raging, and France had been recently invaded, from avenging the injuries she had received, by carrying her arms into the territories of her enemies. And if France, by way of in-

demnity for the past and security for the future, departed from her original purpose, by appropriating some of her conquests to her own use, this could not be a legitimate subject of complaint, since it had been the immemorial practice of all the established, regular, and approved governments in Europe. To require France alone to act upon a principle of perfect disinterestedness, while all other powers were at liberty to pursue their respective plans of ambition and aggrandizement, was rather too hard a condition; and if England would not deign to grant her friendship to France but upon terms which would leave her completely to the mercy of her enemies, it is no wonder that France should decline the insidious favour.

In the mean time, the violent party in France, fully possessed with the idea that a war with England must inevitably take place, kept scarcely any measures in the convention in debating upon this subject. But the leading characters in that assembly connected with the majority of the executive council, held very different and much more guarded language. On the 1st of January, 1793, M. Kersaint, a distinguished naval officer, who stood deservedly high in the public esteem, delivered a very able speech in the convention, from which he deduces the general conclusion, "that they ought to be equally remote from the desire of provoking war, and from the fear of repelling an unjust aggression. The policy of Pitt," says this orator, "is to adopt the language of hostility, in order, by the apprehension of a maritime war, to compel the French to come to terms with their enemies by land, upon the basis of his mediation." Indignant at this idea, he launches out into a most eloquent display of the inexhaustible resources and invincible courage of France, which time has, indeed, fully verified; but of which, he truly says, Mr. Pitt entertained no conception.

On the 12th January, M. Brissot, generally accounted

the head of the governing party in France, and from whom they derived the popular appellation of *Brissotine*, made a celebrated speech in the convention, on presenting his report from the united committees of foreign affairs, marine, and general defence. In this speech, after enumerating the steps which had been taken by France to preserve amity with England, and the hostile measures recently adopted by that power, he affirms, "that, laying all circumstances together, it is difficult not to conclude, that the cabinet of St. James's, weary of its neutrality, is resolved to take an active part in the coalition which has sworn their ruin. The pride of that monarch, who has so long deplored the ignominy into which royalty has fallen, and from whose breast the event of the American war has not eradicated the fatal inclination of once more combating the spirit of freedom, enforces," he says, "this conviction on the mind. On the other hand, it is evident there exists no solid motive to induce the English ministry to it. Those which are alleged are miserable chicaneries; and it is impossible to deceive the English nation for any length of time, or to persuade her that she ought to expend millions to bar the navigation of the Scheld, or to obtain the explanation of a decree which has been already explained." He then advances divers arguments to prove that the finances of England are totally exhausted; arguments no less futile and fallacious than those subsequently employed by Mr. Pitt, to prove France to be not merely on the verge, but in the gulf, of bankruptcy. In the general tenor of this famous report, there is nothing which can lead us to suppose that a war with England was a favourite object with M. Brissot: far from it. He seems perplexed at the sudden change which had taken place in the English councils, and inclined to believe that a war must, in consequence of that change, sooner or later unavoidably ensue. In the prospect of it, he endeavours to awaken all the ardour, the genius, and

the spirit of his countrymen, in order to animate them to engage in this unlooked-for and arduous contest ; and he indulges, or professes to indulge,—if forced to the trial—sanguine expectations of a favourable result from the several circumstances he expatiates upon : but that he was desirous to make the experiment, there exists no shadow of proof, no symptom of probability.

On the 7th January, M. Le Brun, distrusting perhaps the temper of Chauvelin, wrote himself a dispatch, to be communicated to the British minister, lord Grenville, breathing throughout the true spirit of political wisdom ; and it was looked up to by the moderate party in France with fond and eager hope, as—like the American petition of Penn—the olive-branch of reconciliation, and like that, also, it was rejected in the very same spirit of haughtiness and infatuation.

Perhaps pride and folly were never carried to a greater height than in the reply of lord Grenville to this truly admirable dispatch. “ If this notification,” says his lordship, “ had been made to me under a regular and official form, I should have found myself under the necessity of replying,” &c. Again ; “ under this form of extra-communication I may yet be permitted to tell you,” &c. In the very act of replying, therefore, this arrogant statesman presumes to insinuate, that M. Chauvelin, or rather the government of France, is not to consider his letter as an answer. The whole of the letter is such as might be expected from a politician, guilty, at the outset, of such puerility and presumption.

M. Le Brun, in his excellent memorial, justly considers the dispute as reduced to two specific causes of complaint : the decree of November, with its attendant circumstances ; and the navigation of the Scheld. And the English minister states, “ that he has found, in the *paper remitted to him*, nothing satisfactory as to these points.”
Far,

First, "The declaration of *wishing* to intermeddle in the affairs of other countries, is there renewed ; no denial is made, or reparation offered, for the outrageous proceedings stated in his lordship's letter of December 31st."

That the decree, in the meaning ascribed to it by the court of London, was indefensible, is unquestionable ; but as the government of France thought fit to put a friendly, even if it should appear a forced, construction upon it, that interpretation ought undoubtedly to have been admitted. When no act has been done, and when nothing but a supposed principle or general disposition is complained of, an express disavowal of such principle, and denial of such intention, ought to be accepted, because it is all that the case admits of.

To lord Grenville's perverse and wilful misconstruction of the explanation, an admirable reply is made ; and the examples of Henry IV. and queen Elizabeth, are happily adduced in illustration of the true meaning. But if a cavilling negotiator, in the spirit of a chicaning attorney, will not allow the persons with whom he negotiates to understand their own meaning, or explain their own declarations, what can any farther discussion avail ? If continued, it must necessarily degenerate into disgusting and acrimonious altercation.

As M. Le Brun took pains to shew that France did not understand the decree in a sense hostile to England, this proved the anxiety of the French government, that it should not be a cause of rupture between the two countries. To pursue the argument farther on the part of the English minister, was in fact to assume the disputatious province of a schoolman, and to resign altogether that of a statesman.

As to the complaint, that no reparation is offered for the rash, and, to adopt lord Grenville's expression, "outrageous proceedings" of the convention, it may be fairly asked what reparation the executive council had it in their power

to offer? They could not even venture to express their disapprobation of these proceedings, and much less to offer any such reparation as lord Grenville absurdly insisted upon. A just regard to the *king's dignity*, therefore, not to mention the interest of the country, required that as little mention as possible should be made of those irregular and licentious acts committed, when England had withdrawn her ambassador from Paris, and consequently could have no official information of what passed there; and of such a nature, that any negotiator on the part of the English, who deserved the name of a statesman, would have wished to bury them in eternal oblivion. As nothing of this kind had happened previous to the period when England was supposed hostile to France, so when amity was restored, it could not be imagined that any similar outrages would again occur.

Secondly, "The right of infringing treaties, and violating the rights of our allies," his lordship says, "is still maintained, by offering an illusory negotiation upon this subject," &c. It is true, that M. Le Brun entered upon an elaborate justification, or rather palliation of the measure adopted by the French, in relation to the Scheld, and that the apology, though ingenious and plausible, is founded upon inadmissible *data*. Certainly, however, the political right of Holland to the exclusive navigation of that noble river, is a most invidious one: to be vindicated only by an appeal to arbitrary and artificial restrictions, in contradistinction to natural and common right, as arising from, and approving itself to the genuine feelings of mankind. That the faith of treaties should be kept sacred, is however a principle of such extensive utility and importance, as to supersede much fair and specious theory. And England was certainly justified in making the opening of the Scheld, to the prejudice of her ally, a subject of complaint, if called upon by Holland, though there existed no necessity for her standing forward, armed cap-

à-pié, the unsolicited champion of the Dutch in this obnoxious quarrel.

But the validity of the abstract reasonings of the French minister is of little consequence. The material question is, what are his practical concessions? He declares "that France has renounced, and still renounces all conquest; that she will occupy the Netherlands no longer than the war, and during that time which may be necessary for the Belgians to secure and consolidate their liberty; and that they will leave the dispute relative to the Scheld, to a direct negotiation with the Belgians."

An able statesman would have wished for no fairer opening for a general treaty. The terms on which France was willing to conclude a pacification, not with England only, but with Austria, were here made fully apparent. France was determined that the low countries should not again revert to the Austrian dominion; but she had not yet formed any fixed design of annexing them to her own territory. Considering the actual situation of affairs, this would have been a very equitable compromise. Whether Belgia returned to her former subjection, or whether she was erected into a separate republic, was a matter of small import to England. In both cases, it must be English arms and English money that must preserve that country from becoming a province of France; and had England acceded to this overture, France, if sincere, could not have refused to give adequate security for the execution of it. To this, therefore, the whole attention of the British ministry ought to have been turned: the business of the Scheld being obviously comprehended in the greater question, relative to the relinquishment of Belgium.

In a word, the grand political danger to which Great Britain in the present crisis was exposed, appeared evidently to be, that France, in the height of the elation excited by her recent successes, would annex for ever the

Belgic provinces to her empire, as she had already annexed the duchy of Savoy. That she had not proceeded to this extremity, notwithstanding the ambitious views of aggrandizement she had now disclosed, and the great temptation which they held out, could not possibly be ascribed to any other motive than the desire of her government not to involve itself in a war with England. There was indeed a formidable party in France, which, enraged at the conduct of England, and eager to exalt the power and grandeur of the republic, would have ventured without hesitation upon this measure. And Danton, the chief of this party, formally made the proposition in the convention at the latter end of January 1793. Then it was that the memorable words were pronounced by this orator, "*Les limites de la France sont marquées par la nature. Nous les atteindrons dans leurs quatre points à l'océan, au Rhin, aux Alpes, aux Pyrénées.*" In his style of terrific eloquence, speaking of the enemies of France, he said, "*vous leur avez jetté le gand ; ce gand est la tête d'un Roi-c'est le signal de leur mort prochaine.*"

At this time almost every hope of reconciliation with England had vanished, yet the proposition of Danton was over-ruled. The Girondists most reluctantly regarded Britain as ranking with the decided enemies of France. Urged as they were by their powerful and popular antagonists, the question of incorporation was not determined even by the commissaries at Brussels, till the 3d February, in the immediate prospect of a war, upon the actual declaration of which against England, it was irreversibly decreed amidst the loud and universal acclamations of the convention.

In the memorial of M. Le Brun, it is voluntarily and expressly declared by the executive council, that the occupation of the Netherlands will continue no longer than the war. This was precisely the concession which England had most reason to wish, and if France was earnest in her

desire of peace, to expect. Nothing therefore remained for the English minister, but to signify in handsome and conciliatory language, the acceptance on the part of England, of the terms proposed as a basis of negotiation, and to inquire what security France was prepared to offer for the performance of her engagement. Instead of this mild and moderate mode of procedure, lord Grenville tells the ambassador, "under a form," as he takes care to insult M. Chauvelin and the French government, by repeatedly reminding him of extra-official communications, "that his explanations are not considered as sufficient; that what he has advanced is unsatisfactory; that his offers are *illusory*, and that ALL the MOTIVES which gave rise to the preparations, STILL continue!" repeating the same extravagant and insolent demand, *that France should immediately evacuate her conquests*, which he had made in his former note, to which he refers. A more palpable and egregious act of political pride and folly, or one attended with more fatal consequences, does not occur, it may be safely affirmed, in the diplomatic annals of Europe.

On the 17th of January, 1793, while the dispatch of M. Le Brun was still under deliberation, M. Chauvelin tendered to lord Grenville, the letters of credence recently received from the government of France. On the 18th, lord Grenville returned his answer to the dispatch, and on the 20th, he transmitted a second letter to M. Chauvelin, informing him, "that under the present circumstances," *i. e.* while a negotiation was depending between the two countries of the highest importance, and the success of which might depend upon the recognition of the ambassador, "his majesty does not think proper to receive them." Is it possible to offer a better or wiser reason for this refusal, than that which Mr. Fox assigned in a celebrated speech in parliament, viz. "that the heads of

the executive council in France, had not been anointed from the holy oil-cruise before the altar of Rheims?"

The recognition in question, was by no means a matter of mere external decorum, or of court etiquette, but of high consideration and national policy. Allowing the French nation to be ever so politically culpable, is there any trace of sense or reason in a pertinacious refusal to style that a government, which we are compelled to treat as such, though it were founded in violence and usurpation? Did any of the powers of Europe argue in this manner in the case of Cromwell? Had we not affairs of great importance to transact with this government, whether it were regular or irregular, lawful or unlawful? And could a refusal to acknowledge it as a government, answer any purpose, but that of irritation? In whom at this period did the government of France reside, if not in the executive council and convention? And with whom did the right inseparable from a government, as such, to nominate agents to treat with other governments, inhere, if not in them? Surely not in the degraded, powerless, unfortunate monarch! Lord Grenville certainly had not studied the science of politics in the school of Grotius, who expressly says, "a prince does not stipulate for himself, but for the people under his government; and a king deprived of his kingdom, loses his right of sending ambassadors."—*Grotius de Bell.*

Neither the existence nor the permanence of the new republic depended upon the recognition of the English court; and the interests of the two countries imperiously demanded, that some open and authorized mode of communication should be established between them. Had this recognition been made in that negative form, which the uninterrupted residence of lord Gower would have implied, there would have existed no necessity for making it in a more positive manner. But those blind and rash

statesmen who, for the misfortune of Britain, directed her councils at this period, chose to place this question foremost upon the canvas, and to make an express and formal dispute of it ; thus virtually contesting to France its having an organ left wherewith to address foreign powers.

No sooner was this final and peremptory refusal to recognize the republic in the person of its ambassador, known at Paris, than an order of recall was transmitted to M. Chauvelin by the executive council. But though this step was doubtless deemed indispensable, the council did not yet relinquish the fond and fruitless wish for peace.

On the 26th of January, three days after the recall of Chauvelin, M. Maret, the confidential agent of the council, approved by Mr. Pitt in preference to the ambassador, and of a disposition eminently mild and conciliatory, was dispatched by the council to London, with new powers and fresh instructions. What was the specific nature of those instructions, yet remains a secret; but there is ground to believe, that the concessions he was empowered to make were very great. No sooner was he landed at Dover, than he was informed that M. Chauvelin had been ordered (January 24th) to depart the kingdom in eight days. This was the consequence of the intelligence received on that day, of the fatal death of the king of France on the 21st. M. Maret immediately wrote to M. Le Brun for fresh orders, and proceeded to the metropolis. In the actual circumstances of the case, not deeming himself empowered to demand an interview, or to make any direct overture, he contented himself with sending a short note to lord Grenville, informing him that he had come over to take charge of the diplomatic papers in the house of the French envoy. Of this his lordship took not the least notice. M. Maret remained therefore *incognito* in London, till the intelligence arrived of the French declaration of war. This

was the immediate result of the hostile dismissal of M. Chauvelin. Such dismissal, conformably to the tenor of the second article of the treaty of 1786, which the court of London had recently acknowledged to be still in force, being equivalent to a declaration of war on the part of Great Britain, on being apprized of this great event, M. Maret sent a second letter to lord Grenville to take leave, and returned to Paris.

Such is the simple statement of facts, relative to the great and momentous question of the origin of the war of 1793. And it might well seem sufficient to rest the merits of the question upon this clear and plain statement, were it not, for fuller satisfaction, advisable to reply to certain objections speciously urged against it.

It is affirmed in general, that notwithstanding the reiterated professions of the French government, and their pretended concessions relative to the points in dispute, there existed a real, though secret, determination to engage in a war with England at all events. This is said to appear,

I. From the oath taken by all the members of the national assembly (September 4, 1792) of hatred to kings and royalty, in the scope of which, England, as well as the continental powers, must be included. But if so, why was not this oath made a subject of complaint at that period? why was not the resentment of the English government excited by it? and why did the court of London continue, long after this time, her professions of strict and perfect neutrality? The plain fact is, that the oath extended, and was well understood to extend, merely to the kingly and royal government of France, the subversion of which had just taken place, and the restoration of which they abhorred and deprecated. If England is at liberty to declare her detestation of republican principles, without involving any reflection upon the free republics of Holland and Switzerland, why might not the govern-

ment of France declare its abhorrence of monarchical principles, in which the king of England had no more reason to think himself personally alluded to, than the king of Melinda. Kingly government is, in its own nature, certainly consistent with political and civil liberty; though from peculiar circumstances it might, with good reason, or at least with great probability, be deemed incompatible with the secure establishment of a free constitution in France.

II. The same inference is deduced, with still less plausibility, from the violent speeches made by Carra, Danton, Barrere, and other demagogues in the convention; which no more exhibited the real sentiments of that body, than the passionate declamations of Burke and Windham conveyed the genuine sense of the British house of commons. The manner in which the seditious addresses were received at a subsequent period, originated entirely in the opinion then entertained by a majority of the convention, of the inveterately hostile disposition of the English court.

III. It is said that Monge, minister of marine, and consequently a member of the executive council, on the very day that lord Grenville's answer was delivered to Chauvelin, transmitted a circular letter to the sea-port towns in France, of the most inflammatory nature, and the farthest in the world from pacific. "Le roi et son parlement," says this minister, "veulent nous faire la guerre. Les republicains Anglais le souffriront-ils? Dejà ces hommes libres témoignent leur mécontentement, et la répugnance qu'ils ont à porter les armes contre leurs freres les François. Eh bien! nous volerons à leurs secours; nous ferons une descente dans cette isle. Nous y lancerons cinquante mille bonnets de la liberté. Nous y planterons l'arbre sacré et nous tendrons les bras à nos freres republicains. La tyrannie de leur gouvernement sera bientôt détruit. Que chacun de nous se pénétre fortement de cette idée."

Also, on the 7th January, the day on which the famous dispatch of Le Brun to Chauvelin was dated, a minute, or resolution, of the executive council was transmitted by them to the municipality of St. Malo, and no doubt to many other persons and places, calculated to rouse the people to a war with England. In the reply of the conseil-general of the commune to the letter of Monge, it is said : “ A l’instant où nous avons reçu votre lettre avec la délibération du conseil exécutif, en date du 7 Janvier, nous nous sommes empressés de concert avec l’ordonnateur civil de lui donner la plus grande publicité, par la voie de l’impression ; bien certain que nos concitoyens seraient jaloux de prouver leur patriotisme, en entrant dans les vues du pouvoir exécutif, et faisant leurs efforts pour co-opérer de tous leur moyens à anéantir les tyrans, et les hordes d’esclaves ligués contre notre liberté.”

But in reply to this, it is obvious to remark, that Monge, as well as another member of the executive council, Pache, were of the jacobin faction, who deemed the republic disgraced by the temporizing and pusillanimous measures of the governing party. These violent spirits, regarding England as having already virtually joined the coalition against France, were eager to engage in an open declaration of war with that power, and sanguine in their expectations of a general revolt against the government. The annexation of the low countries to France, would, as they knew, be the immediate consequence of this declaration, and they entertained the magnificent ambition of making the Rhine the boundary of the Gallic republic. The letter of Monge was, therefore, perfectly in character ; and no inference can be drawn from it to the prejudice of the governing party, which had not sufficient influence to exclude their antagonists entirely from the management of affairs. As to the minute, or resolution, of the executive council, above alluded to, it does not appear to have been in the smallest degree exceptionable. The

impression which the dispatch of Le Brun might make upon the English government, was very doubtful. However anxious the council might be for peace, it was necessary to prepare for war. Did England remit her hostile preparations during this interval? did she not, on the contrary, declare in positive terms, that she would not discontinue them? and is it fair or just to style that duplicity in France, which in any other nation would be regarded as the result of prudence, or rather, of common sense?

IV. A specious and imposing argument against the good faith of the French government is, the order issued by the executive council, January 10th, three days after the date of Le Brun's dispatch, to general Miranda, who, in the absence of general Dumourier, commanded the French army in the Netherlands, to invade Dutch Flanders, and the province of Zealand, in twelve days at farthest. This admits, however, of a very easy solution, on the hypothesis that France was sincerely solicitous to effect an amicable accommodation with England. Upon a general review of the events which had taken place in such quick succession during the last thirty days—the proclamation for calling the parliament, the artifices of alarm, the embodying of the militia, the openly hostile speech of the king, the inimical bills, and, above all, the haughty and implacable spirit of lord Grenville's answer to M. Chauvelin's memorial—it is morally certain that M. Le Brun, in his excellent dispatch of the 7th January, must have entertained very faint hopes of the final success of the negotiation; and it was known, from the strict alliance and reciprocal engagements subsisting between England and Holland, that hostilities with the latter must be the inevitable consequence of a war with the former. M. Dumourier, at a still earlier period, auguring an unfavourable issue to the negotiation, himself assures us, "that he informed the minister, Le Brun, in his dis-

patches from the Netherlands, December 1792, that it was impossible to advance, or even to defend the Meuse, without being in possession of Maestricht. The garrison was incomplete, and the place so ill provided, that it could not have held out a single week. Le Brun, in answer to the reiterated demands of the general, commanded him to observe a strict neutrality, which was maintained with the utmost precision, although the Dutch government did not give itself the trouble of dissembling its predilection to the Imperialists and Prussians. A prohibition, under pain of death, had just been established, forbidding any provisions to be delivered to the French army; while immense magazines were established, with the consent of the Dutch government, on the Lower Rhine, for the emperor and the king of Prussia*."

At this period, the executive council indulged flattering hopes of a reconciliation with England: those hopes were now much weakened. The reply of lord Grenville, which could not fail to arrive within twelve days, would, however, be decisive. If favourable, the order to Miranda would, of course, be revoked; if otherwise, the French government secured the advantage of an early attack and surprise. The order mentions, it is true, twelve days *at farthest*; and M. Dumourier, in transmitting it, says to Miranda, "there is no time to lose;" and "that the whole depends upon promptitude and secrecy." And certainly an invasion within twelve days would display great promptitude, and its concealment would require great secrecy. In fact, general Dumourier, and consequently the executive council, well knew the impossibility of putting the plan of invasion in immediate execution. General Miranda himself, in his answer to Dumourier, says, "de crois votre plan bien difficile à exécuter dans la situation de nudité, et manque absolu de magasins où

* Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 407.

nos armées se trouvent." And so convinced was general Dumourier, and the council, of the truth of this representation, that the project was, for the present, entirely laid aside.

V. The testimony of M. Dumourier has been adduced, to prove the good faith of England, and the total want of sincerity in France. That extraordinary man has asserted in his *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 103, "that it would have been extremely easy for France to have avoided a war with England." And in the same volume, speaking of his own residence at Paris at the beginning of January 1793, while Le Brun was carrying on the negotiation with England, and at the same time concerting measures with Dumourier for the next campaign, he expressly says, "that Le Brun desired the general to pay no regard to the negotiation." It has been, moreover, asserted, that the last effort for peace on the part of France, viz. that in which M. Maret was engaged, proceeded entirely from the general, in direct opposition to the sentiments of the executive council.

All this is either untrue, or entirely foreign to the purpose. M. Dumourier is unquestionably warranted in asserting, that France might with ease have avoided a war with England, had she uniformly acted upon a system of moderation and discretion; and not with England merely, but probably with all other powers, who were eagerly watching to take advantage of her errors. But when, in consequence of the provocations and aggressions of France, the anger and resentment of England were carried to so extravagant a pitch, that they could be appeased only, on the part of France, by relinquishing all her conquests, and rescinding all her decrees, France could not avoid a war with England, without leaving herself completely at the mercy of her enemies. France must, doubtless, bear her share of blame; but an infinite preponderance of guilt is attributable to the party which, not perhaps ori-

ginally culpable, brings matters to the last dreadful extremity, by proudly and obstinately refusing to accept of reasonable reparation for affronts or injuries received.

As to the language of Le Brun, when in conference with Dumourier, it is obviously no other than a statesman would naturally, while a negotiation was pending, use to a general in respect to his warlike preparations, especially if he knew that the negotiation must terminate shortly, and had little expectation of its terminating successfully. Upon the whole it is perfectly evident, from an inspection into the Memoirs of general Dumourier, that he entertained no doubt whatever of the sincerity of the executive council relative to the negotiation; while on the contrary, he intimates the strongest suspicions of Mr. Pitt and the English cabinet. How far the purposed revival of the negotiation in the person of M. Maret, is to be ascribed to general Dumourier, will be best ascertained by a concise and accurate summary of facts.

It appears, from broken and imperfect evidence indeed, upon the whole probable, that there were in the British cabinet, certain persons a little cooler and wiser than the rest, who secretly wished for peace, and that Mr. Pitt himself was of the number. But that minister had at no time displayed that commanding foresight which marks a superior mind, or that controlling prudence which ought to characterize the man upon whom depends the fate of millions. At no time had he ever endeavoured to stem the torrent of public prejudice, or to make the people calm and wise, when they were inflamed and ignorant. The stream of public opinion he had always submitted patiently and diligently to watch, and to float upon its surface, not in any one instance to alter or direct its course. In the present crisis he had not energy of mind openly or publicly to oppose those frantic measures of alarm, which were carrying the nation with headlong violence into a bloody and desperate war; but he attempted

with secret and feeble efforts, ineffectually to counteract them. He had early in the negotiation desired that M. Chauvelin might be superseded by M. Maret, whose temper and mode of negotiating were more mild and flexible than those of M. Chauvelin, and with whom Mr. Pitt could hold more frequent and unrestrained intercourse; but this the executive council, fearing to offend the party with which the ambassador was connected, thought proper to decline, although M. Le Brun wrote the following dispatch with his own hand; doubtless to obviate any ill effect apprehended from M. Chauvelin's roughness and want of address.

Three days, however, after the recall of M. Chauvelin, the executive council sent M. Maret on a confidential mission to London, with fresh instructions of great moment; but the object of this mission was frustrated by the previous and hostile dismissal of Chauvelin. M. Dumourier left Paris on the same day with M. Maret. In the mean time, as general Dumourier himself informs us, (*Mem. vol. i. p. 128*) De Maulde, a confidential agent of the executive council at the Hague, had been assured by lord Auckland, that the British cabinet would have no objection to negotiate with general Dumourier; and that Mr. Pitt himself had made a declaration to the same purpose. The imbecility and incongruity of the British councils are placed in the most striking point of view, when we reflect that precisely at this period (January 25), copies of the papers which had passed between lord Grenville and M. Chauvelin, were laid before the States-general by lord Auckland, accompanied with a memorial of such a nature, that all the collections of diplomatic papers ever published, may be safely challenged to furnish any thing similar to it. Under the veil and pretence of being an official document, it contained a most furious and rancorous invective against the French revolution and its authors; discovering a strange and total disregard to the

dignity and decorum of the character and station of an ambassador. In this lunatic state paper, the terms "wretches," "miscreants," "villany," "atrocities," "infamous," &c. were used with as little reserve as if authorized by diplomatic prescription.

On the arrival of general Dumourier in Flanders, he proposed, in consequence of the intimation given to De Maulde, a conference with lord Auckland at some place near the borders; which proposal, as M. Dumourier tells us, was received by his lordship with the greatest pleasure, and he instantly, with the approbation of general Dumourier, communicated the proposition to the grand pensionary Van Spiegel, who also consented to take part in the conference. His lordship dispatched three successive packet-boats to England, for the information of his court, and to obtain instructions. He said "the answer would soon arrive, and that it was by no means his design to amuse the general, or to delay his plans or preparations for the next campaign." It was decided, that as soon as lord Auckland received the answer from his court, that the conference should be held at the Moerdyke, on board the yacht of the prince of Orange.

M. Dumourier, however, placed so little confidence in lord Auckland's professions, that he entertained strong suspicions of an insidious design on the part of the English government. "On pourrait craindre," says he, "que le ministre Pitt n'aurait voulu qu'amuser le général Dumourier." In this conjecture, however, he was probably mistaken. The English government consented with the utmost facility to the proposed conference at the Moerdyke, and formally authorized lord Auckland to treat with Dumourier. On the receipt of his instructions, lord Auckland dispatched a courier to the general, who was then at Antwerp, and proposed the 10th of February for holding the first conference. But this design was altogether suspended, by the declaration of war on the part of

France against Great Britain and Holland, on the 1st of that month.

The executive council were apprized of the secret overture made to De Maulde before M. Dumourier's departure from Paris ; and this appears to have incited them to try the event of another effort, through the medium of M. Maret—not being very willing probably to transfer a business of this nature from civil to military hands. A difference of opinion, however, arose on this occasion in the council, and M. Clavieres joined Monge and Pache, in thinking the mission useless and superfluous. But the opinion of M. Le Brun and Garat finally prevailed, and M. Maret was dispatched with great powers. But as it was requisite to keep M. Dumourier in good humour, he was told that M. Maret's mission was merely designed to precede and facilitate his. “ On envoie,” says the general in a letter to Miranda, “ un agent secret fort connu de M. Pitt ; pour demander un sauf conduit pour moi, et l'assurance d'être bien venu,” &c. And in his Memoirs he tells us, “ Il fut décidé que Maret qui avait déjà fait plusieurs voyages es Angleterre, y serait renvoyé pour savoir de M. Pitt, si réellement il souhaitait traiter personnellement avec le général Dumourier.”—*Tom. i. p. 121.*

To attribute the merits of this last effort to preserve the peace of two great and powerful nations, to M. Dumourier, in contradistinction to the executive council, is evidently absurd. It was a civil, and not a military transaction ; and M. Dumourier could do nothing without the express sanction and authority of the council, who went indeed far greater lengths to attain the object in view, than his vanity would suffer him to suspect. For even when he wrote the account, as it appears in his Memoirs, he was so ignorant of the extent and importance of M. Maret's mission, that he represents that able and excellent negotiator as merely sent to prepare the way for

him*. The stubborn fact, that new and voluntary concessions were made by the executive council, through the medium of M. Maret, is at all events indubitably ascertained by the positive testimony of Mr. Miles, to whom his instructions were confidentially communicated; and if those concessions were so great as Mr. Miles frankly represents them to have been, they must have proved their own sincerity. For the only great political question really at issue was, what security the French would give for the restitution or relinquishment of the Netherlands at the æra of a general peace; which, if England had been the mediator of it, would in all probability have been easily and speedily re-established.

VI. It is triumphantly alleged, that the American government, which could not be suspected of a bias in favour of Great Britain, had formally pronounced the war of France against England, to be an offensive war on the part of the former.

The grand and laudable object of the government of America, and of every wise man of every political party included in that government, was to maintain an absolute neutrality between the two contending powers, and not to be drawn into a war with which she had no natural or political concern. But by the eleventh article of the treaty of alliance with France, signed at Paris, February 1778, America agreed to guarantee for ever to that power, the actual possessions of France in the West Indies. It was therefore a matter of the utmost moment to America, in the present circumstances, to find out some plausible pretext to evade the inconvenience which might eventually result from this guarantee. The president, Washington, in consequence put several questions relative to the situation

* Vide Memoirs of Dumourier, compared with the correspondence of Miles, and the documents quoted by Marsh.

of affairs, to his council of state, for the guidance of his conduct in this emergency. To the two first questions, whether an ambassador from the REPUBLIC OF FRANCE should be received? And whether it were fitting that the treaties heretofore made with France should be considered binding in the present circumstances? the council answered in the affirmative. To the third question, Is the guarantee in the treaty of alliance applicable to a defensive war only? they also answered affirmatively. And to the last question, whether the war was defensive or offensive? they replied, "entirely and unequivocally offensive."

This has been represented as a decision not liable to the slightest suspicion of partiality, and as in a manner dictated by the voice of justice herself. But though it will easily be admitted to be the verdict of a government which could not be suspected of a bias in favour of Great Britain, as they were not deciding upon an abstract proposition; they may possibly by some persons be suspected of a bias in favour of themselves. France, however, perfectly sensible of the embarrassing situation of America, and resting satisfied with the concessions in her favour, contained in the two first answers, shewed no resentment at this verdict in favour of England, extorted by the necessity of the case, and in a literal sense, justified by the French declaration of war against Great Britain, though not in the least affecting the real merits of the question, as the persons whose names are subscribed to the answers were much too enlightened not to know; and which Mr. Jefferson, the then secretary of state, and now president elect, would, as there is good reason to believe, be the first to acknowledge.

In consequence of these answers, a proclamation was immediately issued, declaring that the United States would remain neutral towards all the powers at war.

Such was the important and advantageous result of a decision which the deplorable blindness and bigotry of party, have represented as not liable to the slightest suspicion of partiality.

MEMORIAL FROM M. CHAUVELIN, MINISTER OF
FRANCE, TO LORD GRENVILLE,

DECEMBER 27, 1792.

THE undersigned minister plenipotentiary of France, has the honour to communicate to lord Grenville, the instructions which he has received from the executive council of the French republic, with orders to lay them before his Britannic majesty's secretary of state for the department of foreign affairs, in case he should think that he could not speedily enough obtain an interview with the minister.

The French government, by continuing since the recall of lord Gower from Paris, to leave at London a minister plenipotentiary, thought they gave to his Britannic majesty an unequivocal proof of the desire they had to remain in good understanding with the British court, and to see all those clouds dissipated, to which events necessary and inseparable from the internal government of France seemed then to give birth. The interests of the executive council of France toward England, have never ceased to be the same ; but they cannot see with indifference the public conduct which the British ministry observe at present toward France. It is much to be regretted, that they have perceived in this conduct, an indisposition which they still force themselves not to believe. They think it a duty, however, which they owe to the French nation, not to leave it much longer in that state of uncertainty into which it has been thrown by several

measures lately adopted by the British government ; an uncertainty in which the English nation must share, and which must be equally unworthy of both.

The executive council of the French republic have consequently authorized the minister of France at London, to demand with openness of the ministers of his Britannic majesty, whether France ought to consider England as a neutral or hostile power, and have particularly charged him to obtain on this point a definitive answer. But in demanding from the ministers of his Britannic majesty, an open and candid explanation of their intentions toward France, the executive council do not wish that the smallest doubt should exist respecting the disposition of France toward England, and of its desire to remain at peace with it. They even wish to answer previously to all those reproaches which may be thrown out against France, in order to justify England. Reflecting on the reasons which might determine his Britannic majesty to break with the French republic ; the executive council can see them only in a false interpretation given perhaps to the decree of the national convention, of November 19. If the British ministry are really alarmed by that decree, it can only be for want of comprehending the true meaning of it. The national convention never intended that the French republic should favour insurrections, and espouse the cause of a few seditious persons, or in a word, that it should endeavour to excite disturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever. Such an idea would be rejected by the French nation. It cannot without injustice, be imputed to the national convention. This decree then is applicable only to those people, who after having conquered their liberty, may request the fraternity and assistance of the French republic, by a solemn

and unequivocal expression of the general will*. France not only ought and wishes to respect the independence of England, but that also of its allies, with whom it is not at war. The undersigned therefore has been charged to declare formally, that France will not attack Holland, while that power confines itself on its part within the bounds of strict neutrality. The British government being thus assured respecting the two points, no pretence for the least difficulty can remain, but on the question of opening the Scheld; a question irrevocably decided by reason and justice, of little importance in itself, and on which the opinion of England, and perhaps even of Holland, are too well known, to render it difficult to make it seriously the sole cause of the war. Should the British ministry, however, embrace this last motive to induce them to declare war against France, would it not then be probable, that their private intention was to bring about a rupture at any rate, and to take the advantage at present of the most futile of all pretences, to colour an unjust aggression long ago meditated?

On this fatal supposition, which the executive council rejects, the undersigned would be authorized to support with energy the dignity of the French people; and to declare with firmness, that a free and powerful nation will accept war, and repel with indignation an aggression so manifestly unjust, and so unprovoked on their part. When all these explanations, necessary to demonstrate the purity of the intentions of France, and when all peaceful and conciliatory measures shall have been exhausted

* Decree of the 19th November, is as follows:

Séance du Lundi, 19 Novembre, 1792.

Lepeaux propose, et la convention adopte la rédaction suivante, " LA CONVENTION NATIONALE déclare au nom de la nation Française, qu'elle accordera fraternité et secours à tous les peuples qui voudront recouvrir leur liberté; et charge le pouvoir exécutif de donner aux généraux les ordres nécessaires pour porter secours à ces peuples, et défendre les citoyens qui auraient été vexés ou qui pourraient l'être pour la cause de la liberté."

By the French nation, it is evident that the whole weight and the whole responsibility of the war will, sooner or later, fall upon those who have provoked it. Such a war would really be the war of the British ministry only against the French republic; and should this truth appear for a moment doubtful, it would not, perhaps, be impossible for France to render it soon evident to a nation which, in giving its confidence, never renounced the exercise of reason, and its respect for justice and truth.

Such are the instructions which the undersigned has received orders to communicate officially to lord Grenville; inviting him, as well as all the council of his Britannic majesty, to weigh with the most serious attention the deliberations and demands which they contain. It is evident that the French nation desires to preserve peace with England. It proves this by endeavouring, with candour and openness, to remove every suspicion which so many passions and various prejudices are continually labouring to excite against it; but the more it shall have done to convince all Europe of the purity of its views, and the rectitude of its intentions, the greater right it will have to a claim of being no longer misunderstood.

The undersigned has orders to demand a written answer to the present note. He hopes that the ministers of his Britannic majesty will be induced, by the explanations which it contains, to adopt ideas favourable to a good understanding between the two nations; and will have no occasion, in order to return to them, to consider the terrible responsibility of a declaration of war, which would incontestably be their work, the consequences of which could be only fatal to both countries, and to all mankind, and in which a generous and free people could not long consent to betray their own interests, by serving to assist and support a tyrannical coalition.

(Signed)

CHAUVELIN.

LORD GRENVILLE'S ANSWER,

DEC. 31, 1792.

SIR, *delivered in a debate at the House of Commons* *Whitehall.*

I HAVE received from you a note, in which, styling yourself minister plenipotentiary of France, you communicate to me, as the king's secretary of state, the instructions which you state to have yourself received from the executive council of the French republic. You are not ignorant that, since the unhappy events of the 10th of August, the king has thought proper to suspend all official communication with France. You are yourself no otherwise accredited to the king than in the name of his most Christian majesty. The proposition of receiving a minister accredited by any other authority or power in France, would be a new question, which, whenever it should occur, the king would have the right to decide according to the interests of his subjects, his own dignity, and the regard which he owes to his allies, and to the general system of Europe. I am therefore to inform you, sir, in express and formal terms, that I acknowledge you in no other public character than that of minister from his most Christian majesty; and that, consequently, you cannot be admitted to treat with the king's ministers in the quality, and under the form, stated in your note.

But observing that you have entered into explanations of some of the circumstances which have given to England such strong grounds of uneasiness and jealousy, and that you speak of these explanations as being of a nature to bring our two countries nearer, I have been unwilling to convey to you the notification stated above, without at the same time explaining myself clearly and distinctly on the subject of what you have communicated to me, though under a form which is neither regular nor official.

Your explanations are confined to three points :

The first is that of the decree of the national convention of the 19th of November, in the expressions of which, all England saw the formal declaration of a design to extend universally the new principles of government adopted in France, and to encourage disorder and revolt in all countries, even those which are neutral. If this interpretation, which you represent as injurious to the convention, could admit of any doubt, it is but too well justified by the conduct of the convention itself. And the application of these principles to the king's dominions has been shewn unequivocally, by the public reception given to the promoters of sedition in this country, and by the speeches made to them precisely at the time of this decree, and since on several different occasions.

Yet notwithstanding all these proofs, supported by other circumstances which are but too notorious, it would have been with pleasure that we should have seen here such explanations, and such a conduct, as would have satisfied the dignity and honour of England with respect to what has already passed, and would have offered a sufficient security in future, for the maintenance of that respect towards the rights, the government, and the tranquillity of neutral powers, which they have on every account the right to expect.

Neither this satisfaction nor this security is found in the terms of an explanation, which still declares to the promoters of sedition in every country, what are the cases in which they may count before-hand on the support and succour of France; and which reserves to that country the right of mixing herself in our internal affairs whenever she shall judge it proper; and on principles incompatible with the political institutions of all the countries of Europe. No one can avoid perceiving how much a declaration like this is calculated to encourage disorder and revolt in every country. No one can be ignorant, how con-

trary it is to the respect which is reciprocally due from independent nations, nor how repugnant to those principles which the king has followed on his part, by forbearing at all times from any interference whatever in the internal affairs of France. And this contrast is alone sufficient to shew, not only that England cannot consider such an explanation as satisfactory, but that she must look upon it as a fresh avowal of those dispositions which she sees with so just an uneasiness and jealousy.

I proceed to the two other points of your explanation, which concern the general dispositions of France with regard to the allies of Great Britain, and the conduct of the convention and its officers relative to the Scheld. The declaration which you there make, "that France will not attack Holland so long as that power shall observe an exact neutrality," is conceived nearly in the same terms with that which you were charged to make in the name of his most Christian majesty in the month of June last. Since that first declaration was made, an officer, stating himself to be employed in the service of France, has openly violated both the territory and the neutrality of the republic, in going up the Scheld to attack the citadel of Antwerp, notwithstanding the determination of the government not to grant this passage, and the formal protest by which they opposed it. Since the same declaration was made, the convention has thought itself authorized to annul the rights of the republic, exercised within the limits of its own territory, and enjoyed by virtue of the same treaties by which her independence is secured. And at the very moment when, under the name of an amicable explanation, you renew to me in the same terms, the promise of respecting the independence and the rights of England and her allies; you announce to me that those in whose name you speak, intend to maintain these open and injurious aggressions.

It is not certainly on such a declaration as this, that any

reliance can be placed for the continuance of public tranquillity.

But I am unwilling to leave without a more particular reply, what you say on the subject of the Scheld. If it were true, that this question is in itself of little importance, this would only serve to prove more clearly, that it was brought forward only for the purpose of insulting the allies of England, by the infraction of their neutrality, and by the violation of their rights, which the faith of treaties obliges us to maintain. But you cannot be ignorant, that here the utmost importance is attached to those principles which France wishes to establish by this proceeding, and to those consequences which would naturally result from them; and that not only those principles and those consequences will never be admitted by England, but that she is, and ever will be, ready to oppose them with all her force.

France can have no right to annul the stipulations relative to the Scheld, unless she have also the right to set aside equally all the other treaties between all the powers of Europe, and all the other rights of England, or of her allies. She can even have no pretence to interfere in the question of opening the Scheld, unless she were the sovereign of the low countries, or had the right to dictate laws to all Europe.

England never will consent, that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under pretence of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the only judge; the political system of Europe established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers. This government, adhering to the maxims which it has followed for more than a century, will also never see with indifference, that France shall make herself either directly or indirectly sovereign of the low countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintain-

ing friendship and peace with England; she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights.

With respect to that character of ill-will which is endeavoured to be found in the conduct of England toward France, I cannot discuss it, because you speak of it in general terms only, without alleging a single fact. All Europe has seen the justice and the generosity which have characterized the conduct of the king. His majesty has always been desirous of peace; he desires it still; but such as may be real and solid, the consistent with the interests and dignity of his own dominions, and with the general security of Europe.

On the rest of your paper I say nothing. As to what relates to me and my colleagues, and king's ministers owe to his majesty the account of their conduct; and I have no answer to give to you on this subject, any more than on that of the appeal which you propose to make to the English nation. This nation, according to that constitution by which its liberty and its prosperity are secured, and which it will always be able to defend against every attack, direct or indirect, will never have with foreign powers, connexion or correspondence except through the organ of its king; of a king whom it loves and reveres, and who has never for an instant separated his rights, his interests, and his happiness, from the rights and interests, and the happiness of his people.

GRENVILLE.

OFFICIAL NOTE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF
FRANCE, IN REPLY TO THE PRECEDING,

JANUARY 7, 1793.

THE provisional executive council of the French republic, before they reply more particularly to each of the points comprehended in the note remitted to them on the part of the minister of his Britannic majesty, will begin by repeating to that minister, the most express assurances of their sincere desire to maintain peace and harmony between France and England. The sentiments of the French nation toward the English, have been manifested during the whole course of the revolution; in so constant, so unanimous a manner, that there cannot remain the smallest doubt of the esteem which it vows to them, and of its desire to have them for friends.

It is then with great reluctance, that the republic would see itself forced to a rupture, much more contrary to its inclination than to its interest. Before it proceeds to such a disagreeable extremity, explanations are necessary; and the object of them is so highly important, that the executive council have not thought that they could entrust them to a secret agent, always to be disavowed. For this reason they have thought proper, under every point of view, to entrust them to citizen Chauvelin, though he is not accredited to his Britannic majesty but from the late king.

The opinion of the executive council on this occasion, is justified by the manner in which our negotiations are at the same time carried on in Spain, where citizen Bourgoign was exactly in the same situation as citizen Chauvelin at London; which, however, has not prevented the minister of the Catholic king from treating with him on a convention of neutrality, the ratification of which

is to be exchanged at Paris between the minister for foreign affairs and the chargé des affaires of Spain. We will even add, that the principal minister of his Catholic majesty, when writing officially on this subject to citizen Bourgoign, did not forget to give him his title of minister plenipotentiary of France. The example of a power of the first rank, such as Spain, might have induced the executive council to hope that we should have found the same facility at London. The executive council, however, readily acknowledge that this negotiation has not been demanded according to diplomatic strictness, and that the citizen Chauvelin is not formally enough authorized. To remove entirely this obstacle, and that they may not have to reproach themselves with having stopt by a simple defect in form, a negotiation on the success of which depends the tranquillity of two great nations; they have sent to citizen Chauvelin credential letters, which will give him the means of treating according to all the severity of diplomatic forms.

To proceed now to the three points which can alone form an object of difficulty with the court of London; the executive council observe on the first, that is to say, the decree of November 19, that we have been misunderstood by the ministers of his Britannic majesty, when they accuse us of having given an explanation which announces to the seditious of all nations, what are the cases in which they may depend before-hand on the succour and support of France. Nothing can be more foreign to the sentiments of the national convention, and to this explanation which we have given, than this reproach; and we did not think it was possible that the open design of favouring seditious persons, could be imputed to us at a moment even when we declared, "that it would be doing an injury to the national convention, to ascribe to them the plan of protecting insurrections and seditious commotions

which might arise in any state ; of associating with the authors of them, and thus of making the cause of a few individuals that of the French nation."

We have said, and we choose to repeat it, that the decree of November 29, could not be applicable, but to the single case where the general will of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call for the assistance and fraternity of the French nation. Sedition can certainly never exist where there is an expression of the general will ; these two ideas mutually exclude each other. For sedition is, and can only be a commotion of a small number against the majority of a nation ; and this commotion would cease to be seditious, if all the members of a society should arise at once, either to correct their government, to change its form entirely, or to accomplish any other object.

The Dutch were certainly not seditious when they formed the generous resolution of throwing off the Spanish yoke, and when the general will of that nation called on the assistance of France. It was not accounted a crime to Henry IV. nor to queen Elizabeth, that they listened to them. A knowledge of the general will is the only basis of transactions between nations ; and we cannot treat with any government, but because that government is supposed to be the organ of the general will of the nation to which it belongs. When by this natural interpretation, therefore, the decree of November 19, is reduced to its real signification, it will be found that it announces nothing more than an account of the general will above all contest, and so founded in right, that it was not worth while to express it. For this reason, the executive council think that the evidence of this right might have perhaps rendered it unnecessary for the national convention to make it the object of a particular decree ; but with the preceding interpretation, it cannot give offence to any nation.

It appears that the ministers of his Britannic majesty have made no objections under the declaration respecting Holland, since their only observation on the subject relates to the discussion concerning the Scheld. It is on this last point therefore that we have to make ourselves understood.

We here repeat, that this question itself is of little importance. The British ministers thence conclude, that it is therefore more evident that it has been brought forward only for the purpose of insulting the allies of England. We reply with much less warmth and prejudice, that this question is absolutely indifferent to England ; that it is little interesting to Holland, but that it is of the utmost importance to the Belgians. That it is indifferent to England, does not even require to be proved. It is little interesting to Holland, since the productions of the Belgic provinces can be conveyed through the canals which end at Ostend. But it is of great importance for the Belgians, on account of the numerous advantages which they may derive from the port of Antwerp. It is therefore on account of this importance to restore to the Belgians the enjoyment of a valuable right, and not to offend any one, that France has declared that it is ready to support them in the exercise of so legal a right.

But is France authorized to break stipulations which oppose the opening of the Scheld ? If we consult the right of nature, and not of nations, not only France, but all the nations of Europe, are authorized to break them. No doubt can remain on this point.

If public right is consulted, we say that it ought never to be but the application of the principles of the general right of nations to the particular circumstances in which nations may be in respect to each other : so that every private treaty which might violate these principles could never be considered but as the work of violence. We will next add, that in regard to the Scheld, the treaty was

concluded without the participation of the Belgians. The emperor, to secure the possession of the Netherlands, sacrificed without scruple the most inviolable of rights. Being master of these beautiful provinces, he governed them, as Europe has seen, with a rod of absolute despotism, respected none of their privileges but those which were of importance for him to preserve, and continually attacked or destroyed the rest. France entering into a war with the house of Austria, expels it from the low countries, and restores liberty to those people whom the court of Vienna had devoted to slavery. Their chains are broken ; they are restored to all those rights which the house of Austria had taken from them. How can that right which they had over the Scheld be excepted, especially when it is of real importance only to those who were deprived of it ? In short, France has too good a profession of political faith to make, to be afraid of avowing its principles. The executive council declares then, not that it may appear to yield to some expressions of threatening language, but only to render homage to truth, that the French republic does not mean to establish itself an universal arbiter of the treaties which bind nations together. It equally knows to respect other governments, and to take care that it may make its own respected. It does not wish to give law to any one, and it will never suffer any one to give laws to it. It has renounced, and still renounces all conquest ; and its occupying the Netherlands will continue no longer than the war, and during that time which may be necessary for the Belgians to secure and consolidate their liberty ; after which, provided they be independent or happy, France will be sufficiently rewarded.

When that nation shall find itself in the full possession of its liberty, and when its general will may be declared legally and unfettered, then if England and Holland still affix any importance to the opening of the Scheld, the

executive council will leave that affair to a direct negotiation with the Belgians. If the Belgians, through any motive whatever, shall consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheld, France will not oppose it. It will respect their independence even in their errors.

After so free a declaration, which manifests the present designs of peace, the ministers of his Britannic majesty ought to entertain no doubt respecting the intentions of France. But if these explanations appear to them insufficient, and if we are still obliged to hear the language of haughtiness, and if hostile preparations are continued in the ports of England, after having done every thing in our power to maintain peace, we will prepare for war, conscious at least of the justice of our cause, and of the efforts we have made to avoid that extremity. We shall combat with regret the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear.

LE BRUN.

REPLY OF LORD GRENVILLE TO THE OFFICIAL NOTE
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF FRANCE,
ADDRESSED TO M. CHAUVELIN, JANUARY 18, 1793.

Whitehall.

I HAVE examined, sir, with the utmost attention, the paper you remitted to me on the 13th of this month. I cannot help remarking that I have found nothing satisfactory in the result of it. The explanations which it contains, are nearly reduced to the same points which I have already replied to at length. The declaration of wishing to intermeddle with the affairs of other countries, is therein renewed. No denial is made, nor reparation offered, for the outrageous proceedings I stated to you in my letter

of December 31, and the right of infringing treaties and violating the rights of our allies is still maintained, by solely offering an illusory negotiation upon this subject, which is put off, as well as the evacuation of the low countries by the French armies, to the indefinite term, not only of the conclusion of the war, but likewise of the consolidation of what is called the liberty of the Belgians.

It is added, that if these explanations appear insufficient to us; if you should be again obliged to hear a haughty tone of language; if hostile preparations should continue in the ports of England, after having tried every effort to preserve peace, you will then make dispositions for war.

If this notification, or that relative to the treaty of commerce, had been made to me under a regular or official form, I should have found myself under the necessity of replying to it, that to threaten Great Britain with a declaration of war because she judged it expedient to augment her forces, and also to declare that a solemn treaty should be broken, because England adopted for her own safety such precautions as already exist in France, would only be considered, both the one and the other, as new grounds of offence, which, as long as they should subsist, would prove a bar to every kind of negotiation.

Under this form of extra-official communication, I think I may yet be permitted to tell you, not in a tone of haughtiness, but of firmness, that these explanations are not considered sufficient, and that all the motives which gave rise to the preparations, still continue. These motives are already known to you by my letter of December 31, in which I marked in precise terms, what those dispositions were which could alone maintain peace and a good understanding. I do not see that it can be useful to the object of conciliation to enter into a discussion with you on separate points under the present circumstances,

as I have already acquainted you with my opinion concerning them. If you have any explanations to give me under the same extra-official form, which will embrace all the objects contained in my letter of the 31st December, as well as all the points which relate to the present crisis with England, her allies, and the general system of Europe, I shall willingly attend to them.

I think it however my duty to inform you in the most positive terms, in answer to what you tell me on the subject of our preparations, that under the present circumstances, all those measures will be continued, which may be judged necessary to place us in a state of protecting the safety, tranquillity, and the rights of this country, as well as to guarantee those of our allies; and to set up a barrier to those views of ambition and aggrandizement, dangerous at all times to the rest of Europe, but which become still more so, being supported by the propagation of principles destructive of all social order.

GRENVILLE.

LETTER FROM LORD GRENVILLE TO M. CHAUVELIN,
ON REFUSING TO RECEIVE HIS LETTERS OF CREDENCE
FROM THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,
JANUARY 20, 1793.

SIR,

I HAVE received your letter of the 17th instant. I have already apprized you that his majesty has reserved to himself the right of deciding according to his judgment upon the two questions of acknowledging a new form of government in France, and of receiving a minister accredited on the part of some other authority in France than that of his most Christian majesty. In answer to the demand you now make, whether his majesty will receive your new letters of credence, I have to inform

you, that under the present circumstances, his majesty does not think proper to receive them.

The request you make of me, is equally incompatible with the form of an extra-official communication, and that character in which you have hitherto been known as minister of his most Christian majesty.

Nothing then remains for me to say relative to the subject of your former letter, particularly after what has just happened in France, than to inform you, that as an agent charged with a confidential communication, you ought certainly to have attended to the necessary measures taken by us to secure your letters and couriers—that as minister of his most Christian majesty you would have enjoyed all those exemptions which the law affords to public ministers properly acknowledged as such; but that as an individual, you can only be considered among the general mass of foreigners resident in England.

GRENVILLE.

LETTER FROM LORD GRENVILLE TO M. CHAUVELIN,
ORDERING HIS IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE FROM THE
REALM, JANUARY 24, 1793.

I AM charged to notify to you, sir, that the character with which you had been invested at this court, and the functions of which have been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated, by the fatal death of his most Christian majesty, you have no longer any public character here.

The king can no longer, after such an event, permit your residence here. His majesty has thought fit to order, that you should retire from this kingdom within the term of eight days; and I herewith transmit to you a copy of the order, which his majesty in his privy council has given to this effect.

I send you a passport for yourself and your suite; and I shall not fail to take all the other necessary steps, in order that you may return to France with all the attentions which are due to the character of minister plenipotentiary from his most Christian majesty, which you have exercised at this court.

GRENVILLE.

The foregoing celebrated correspondence affords very wide scope for animadversion.

In the first of this series of letters, M. Chauvelin, in language very pointed, and somewhat peremptory, desires of the British minister, an open and candid explanation of the dispositions of England towards France, and whether the latter is to regard the former as a neutral or hostile power. He anticipates the objections which might be made relative to the conduct of France, and endeavours in an elaborate manner to obviate them. *First*, as to the decree of the 19th November, he declares that it is not applicable to neutral or friendly nations, and that France ought and wishes to respect the independence of England and her allies.

Secondly, M. Chauvelin represents the opening of the Scheld as a matter reasonable indeed in itself, though of trivial importance, and such as cannot be seriously made the sole cause of war—plainly intimating, that an adjustment of this dispute might easily take place, if the spirit of amity prevailed between the two nations.

He finishes, with warning the British cabinet to consider the terrible responsibility of engaging the British nation in a war upon pretexts so frivolous; and insinuates that an appeal from the ministers to the people, might be attended with dangerous consequences to the former.

Lord Grenville begins his reply, with denying in the rudest manner, the right of M. Chauvelin to the style he assumed, as minister plenipotentiary of France. He dis-

dainfully refuses to accept of M. Chauvelin's disavowal of the injurious construction put upon the decree of November, which he asserts to have been unequivocally confirmed by the conduct of the convention. He insists at large upon the aggression of France in the opening of the Scheld, and declares that France, now in actual possession of the low countries, Liege, a great part of the Palatine, and Savoy, in order to preserve peace with England, must confine herself to the limits of her own territory.

The answer to this letter by M. Le Brun, in the name of the executive council of France, is eminently mild and temperate. He observes, that the court of Spain did not refuse the title of minister plenipotentiary of France to citizen Burgoign, then resident at Madrid. He offers new credentials from the executive council. He again, and in the most positive terms, disavows the offensive meaning ascribed to the decree of November, and explains it in a manner the most respectful and satisfactory. He repeats, that the question of the Scheld is too unimportant and uninteresting to be the cause of war between the two nations, and declares that France will leave the affair to a direct negotiation with the Belgians. He affirms that France has renounced and still renounces all conquest; and that its occupancy of the Netherlands will continue no longer than the war, and during that time which may be necessary for the Belgians to secure and consolidate their liberty.

These are the leading points touched upon in this correspondence, and these the concessions made by France to England in order to maintain the relations of peace and amity between the two countries. In answer to which, Lord Grenville transmitted to M. Chauvelin a second letter, which, if really written with pacific intentions, and with a view to conciliation, may be justly regarded as the most extraordinary production to be found in the diplomatic annals of Europe. For minds capable of re-

flection it will be a melancholy indeed, but not an uninstruc-
tive lesson, to analyse the contents of it, and while
thus employed, they will regret with the great chancellor
Oxenstierna, to see “by how small a portion of wisdom
the world is governed.”

The British minister sets out with declaring, “that he
has examined with the utmost attention the paper remitted
to him, and that he has found nothing satisfactory in the
result of it.” “The declaration,” he asserts, “of wish-
ing to intermeddle with the affairs of other countries,
is there renewed.” But certainly the wish to intermeddle
with the affairs of neutral or friendly countries, is expressly
denied; and no other wish, or intention rather, of inter-
meddling with the affairs of other nations is avowed, than
such as Henry IV. of France and queen Elizabeth gave
examples of. If this explanation was unsatisfactory,
what explanation would or could afford satisfaction?
Lord Grenville proceeds to complain, “that no denial is
made, nor reparation offered for the outrageous proceed-
ings stated in his letter of the 31st December.” This must
indeed be admitted. No denial could be made, for the
charge was true; no reparation could be offered; for the
executive council had it not in their power to make any.
The conduct of the convention was doubtless insulting to
the dignity of the king of England. But the insults al-
luded to were those of a tumultuous and anarchic assem-
bly, exasperated by previous provocation; an assembly
under no controul of law, and regardless of the common
restraints of decorum. In these circumstances, which
rendered it morally and politically certain that no repara-
tion could by any means be obtained, the *dignity* of the
king had been best consulted by avoiding all mention of
the offence, or passing it over, if this high and lofty
minister had so pleased, *as too contemptible for notice*.
Supposing all the essential points in dispute conceded,
surely the offended dignity of the king was no just cause

of war. If amity were restored between the two countries, it would effectually preclude all affronts of this nature in future, and it required but a slender share of magnanimity in present circumstances, to consign them to perpetual oblivion.

Lord Grenville farther says, “ that the right of infringing treaties, and violating the rights of our allies, is still maintained by solely offering an illusory negotiation upon this subject, which is put off, as well as the evacuation of the low countries by the French armies, to the indefinite term not only of the conclusion of the war, but likewise of the consolidation of what is called the liberty of the Belgians.” But this is a most unfair and fallacious statement of the question. The right, speaking in the abstract, of infringing treaties, is not maintained by the French executive council ; but merely the justice of superseding a single regulation in a particular treaty, on the ground of its being a violation of natural right. This is doubtless a dangerous and inadmissible pretension ; but it was in fact given up when the council professed their willingness to leave the negotiation wholly with the Belgians. The excessive alarm and resentment ostensibly excited at the court of London by this claim, must, however, appear very problematic, when it was notorious] that the very same pretension publicly advanced a few years since by the emperor Joseph, met with no opposition whatever from England ; nay, it was very generally understood that it received from the British cabinet, Holland being then in alliance with France, and the object of jealousy and dislike to England, strong though secret encouragement.

But a much more important concession than this relating to the Scheld, immediately follows. France well knew that the grand obstacle to peace with England, so far as her counsels were guided by policy, and not by pride or passion, was the apprehension entertained of the

annexation of the low countries to the territory of the republic, an object extremely tempting to so ambitious and powerful a nation, and which Great Britain had exerted herself for a century and a half with ardour and success to prevent. She declares that her occupation of the Netherlands will continue no longer than the war, and during that time which may be necessary for the consolidation of the Belgic liberty. The moment this great concession was offered, the chief, or rather the sole *end* of the negotiation, if proceeding from a wise and sound policy, was attained; and it only remained to inquire by what *means* England could be assured that such concession should be carried into effect. Lord Grenville says, that only an *illusory* negotiation was offered. But what right had lord Grenville, or could any man have, to style the negotiation *illusory* before it commenced? If these concessions had been accepted as a basis of amicable accommodation, various modes might have been devised for the satisfaction of England, in order to enforce the execution of them. But to reject all negotiation as necessarily illusory, without assigning a single reason in proof of such necessity, is a mode of proceeding which requires a foresight and sagacity more than human to justify.

M. Le Brun proceeds to say, that if the explanations and concessions offered by the executive government of France, are deemed insufficient "*i. e.* insufficient doubtless to serve as a foundation for amicable discussion;" if the same haughty tone of language should be again heard, and the hostile preparations of England are continued—if, in fine, all their efforts to preserve peace should be tried in vain, they will then make dispositions for war." How indeed is it possible that in the case here stated, the executive council could do otherwise? Nevertheless, lord Grenville, in the most provoking spirit of perverseness, interprets these expressions into a new ground of offence, and an insuperable bar to negotiation; and he explicitly declares the explanations to be **INSUFFICIENT**.

It appeared, notwithstanding, that there was still a way open to accommodation, even under what his lordship was pleased to style “this form of extra-official communication;” for though the letter to which his lordship replies, was written by the minister of foreign affairs, in the name of the executive council, it is repeatedly and insultingly affirmed by him to be “neither regular nor official,” an objection befitting a master of the ceremonies rather than a statesman, on whose discretion the welfare of nations depended.

Under this form, however, his lordship announces that the way is still open for the restoration of peace: “In his letter of December 31, he marked,” as he reminds M. Chauvelin, “in specific terms, what those dispositions were, which could alone maintain peace and a good understanding.” By referring to this letter, we find that France, amongst other conditions, is peremptorily required “to confine herself within her own territory”—so that as a preliminary to negotiation with England, that high-spirited and powerful nation was imperiously called upon to relinquish all her conquests, while war was still raging on the continent, and a most formidable confederacy still subsisted, threatening the very existence of the republic. A demand so extravagant, so unjust, so unlikely, or rather impossible to be complied with, was never made; a more preposterous one never will or can be made by any nation calling itself neutral, and professedly endeavouring to terminate her differences amicably with another.

Lord Grenville concludes with a most unaccountable and unintelligible assertion—“that he does not see that it can be useful to the object of conciliation, to enter into a discussion with M. Chauvelin on separate points, under the present circumstances, he having already acquainted him with his *opinion* concerning them.” Can so bold a paradox be hazarded, as that the concessions of France on the distinct and separate points in dispute, deserved

not even to be *discussed* after the British minister had once given his *opinion*? Or that such discussion, supposing it conducted in the spirit of candour, could not in any degree conduce to the object of conciliation? To decline the discussion of separate and specific points of difference, and to invite so vague and vast an investigation as would be necessary to comprehend "all the points which relate to the general system of Europe," is so clearly inimical to the genuine spirit of conciliation, and practical accommodation, that it requires very great faith, not to say credulity, to believe that peace was really the object in view.

Still, and beyond all reasonable expectation, a farther effort was made by the French minister to continue the negotiation; but his letters of credence from the executive council being refused with the most pointed insolence and disdain, and he himself being, on the intelligence of the death of the king of France, ordered forthwith to depart the kingdom, the convention, though it was known that M. Maret had been dispatched on a fresh mission to England, concluding that the court of London would accept of no concession, terminated the discussion by a declaration of war against Great Britain and Holland, February 1, 1793.

ON THE CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF LOUIS XVI. KING OF FRANCE,

SUBSEQUENT TO THE REVOLUTION.

A. D. 1789.

THE sincerity of the late king of France, and the reality of his attachment to the constitution established, A. D. 1791, have been frequent and serious topics of discussion; and there are many persons so partially induk-

gent, or so imperfectly informed, as to imagine that this unfortunate monarch was chargeable with no violation of good faith and integrity during the last eventful years of his life. But on a dispassionate investigation of facts, it will appear that the dissimulation of the king was uniform and systematic, from the period of his assembling the states-general to the day of his dethronement. Truth is sacred, justice is of universal obligation, and in treating of the tremendous topic of the French revolution, there is surely no necessity to heighten the deep and *sombre* tints of the picture.

Although every art and every effort had been tried on the part of the court to prevent the meeting of the states-general, the king of France in his opening speech (May 5, 1789), assumed the merit of convening that assembly from the purest motives of patriotism and good will; and he congratulated them "on the arrival of the day which he had long panted to see." But M. Bertrand de Moleville, who filled for some months during the years 1791 and 1792, the office of minister of marine, and was known to be in the highest confidence of the king, speaks in his Memoirs a language widely different. "Because," says he, "the states-general produced the most execrable revolution that ever existed, is it Louis we ought to accuse? No one is ignorant, that it was not in his power to refuse assembling the states-general. He was forced to it, not only by the universal cry of the kingdom, but by the deplorable imprudence of the parliaments, in declaring that they did not represent the nation; and that they would no longer usurp a right which conscience and honour compelled them to relinquish. The rash and violent proceedings of the archbishop of Toulouse, had been attended with consequences which struck the court with consternation, and in adopting the conciliatory line of conduct recommended by M. Necker, the monarch was influenced by no other motive than fear. "Louis XVI.," says ano-

ther writer of undoubted information and authority on this head, "assailed on every quarter, appointed the opening of the states for the 1st of May, 1789, and yielding at last, but too late, to the wishes of the irritated nation, he suspended the tribunal of the plenary court till the opening of the states-general should take place, though it was impossible it ever could have been organized. The king issued a decree, stating, that he would lodge in the hand of the nation the whole of its rights and privileges, and that it was his earnest desire to connect himself in closer bonds with his subjects. Very little regard was paid to a sacrifice extorted by force and discontents*."

After the convention of estates had actually taken place, the king evidently wavered between opposite counsels; his understanding being too circumscribed to allow him long to follow any consistent and uniform system of action. The famous royal declaration of the 23d of June, 1789, was originally drawn by M. Necker, but alterations so material were subsequently engrafted upon it by the secret advisers of the crown, that he no longer acknowledged it as his; refusing even to attend the king upon this occasion to the assembly.

1st, The declaration, in its original state, did not pretend to annul the resolution by which the *tiers etat* announced itself to be the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY; but on the contrary, it authorized the assembly during the present session to vote individually.

2dly, The plan of M. Necker contained an article, which declared that the citizens of every class should be admitted equally to all offices, without any other distinction than that of abilities and virtues; a concession which at once overthrew all the ancient and odious aristocratic privileges.

3dly, By an article of M. Necker's plan, the assembly voting individually, was empowered to regulate the orga-

* Soulavie's Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 34.

nization of all future assemblies of the states-general : the spirit of the declaration therefore in its original state, was entirely in favour of the *tiers etat*, who would have been highly gratified at this critical moment, by such gracious and open manifestations of the royal countenance and protection. And the specific propositions of the king, consisting of thirty-five articles as they came from the hands of M. Necker, might easily have been modified and reduced to a regular system. But the haughty and peremptory manner in which the *tiers etat* were commanded to rescind the decisive step they had just taken, totally counteracted every good effect the declaration was otherwise calculated to produce.

The king even ventured to throw out an indirect menace of dissolving the assembly, in case of disobedience. “ Vous venez messieurs,” said he, “ d’entendre le resultat de mes dispositions et de mes vues. Elles sont conformes au vif desir que j’ai d’operer le bien public ; et si par une fatalité loin de ma pensée vous m’abandonniez dans une si belle enterprise, *seul* je me considèrai comme leur véritable représentant ; et connoissant vos cahiers, connoissant l’accord parfait qui existe entre le vœu le plus général de la nation, et mes intentions bienfaisantes, j’aurai toute la confiance qui doit inspirer une si rare harmonie, et je marcherai vers le but auquel je veux atteindre avec tout le courage et la fermeté qu’il doit m’inspirer.”

Such language as this was calculated to produce the highest degree of irritation, and the authority of the crown at this period was utterly unequal to the execution of these lofty ideas. Arrogant and boastful words, unaccompanied by the reality of power, will inevitably excite at the same time resentment and contempt. M. Necker was certainly by no means a man of first-rate talents. It is, however, no more than justice to say, that the failure of his projects arose not from any inherent absurdity in

their nature, but from the secret and powerful opposition made to them by persons possessing the substance of that confidence, of which he had only the name and the shadow. But when he found himself unable to carry those measures of which he discerned the wisdom and the rectitude into effect, he ought doubtless, instantly to have resigned his office. To remain for a moment in a situation of such pre-eminent responsibility, lending his sanction to measures which he was no longer allowed to guide, must ever be regarded as demonstrative evidence of a mind wholly devoid of that resolution and energy which the circumstances of the times demanded.

The character of that unfortunate, but well intentioned minister, is thus drawn by M. Bertrand de Moleville, in his *Memoirs*, with a pen dipped in gall. "I knew him well enough to be firmly persuaded, that he never designed the ill he has done, or that he had the least notion that his measures would produce it. I only blame his vanity and his extravagant presumption. He so completely in his conscience believed himself to be the ablest minister that ever existed, that he would have been mortified to have only been compared with Sully and Colbert. He did not hesitate to believe that he combined in a superior degree all the great qualities of the greatest ministers, without any of their faults. Posterity will see in him a man selfish, ambitious, and vain; foolishly intoxicated with the merit which he fancied himself to possess, and jealous of that of others; desirous of excess of honour and of power; virtuous, in words and through ostentation, more than in reality. In a word, he was a presumptuous empiric in politics and morals." The colleague of M. Necker, M. de Montmorin, is declared by M. Bertrand to have been neither constitutionalist nor democrat, but a real royalist. "I must," says he, "at the same time acknowledge, that the extreme weakness of his character prevented him from being useful to his ma-

jesty in circumstances that required much energy." This is equivalent to an assertion, unfortunately too well supported by collateral and independent evidence, that M. de Montmorin was chargeable with the deepest political hypocrisy during the whole term of his administration, even when he seemed most friendly to the establishment of a free constitution.

Louis XVI. of whom M. Bertrand speaks in terms of high-flown panegyric, appears, nevertheless, throughout these memoirs, in a light by no means advantageous. Weak, distrustful, superstitious, inconstant, strongly affected by minute circumstances, incessantly and idly busy in the pursuit of petty, and at the same time, often pernicious objects; mild, humane, and indulgent by nature, but jealous to the last degree of any diminution of power; and when occasionally forced to concessions, artfully and ostentatiously representing them as the effect of his own royal and spontaneous beneficence; perpetually hearkening to men falsely calling themselves "the king's friends," whom in defiance of the public opinion and of the common dictates of prudence, he retained near his person, and of whom M. Bertrand was the chief.

"The nullity of the character of Louis XVI.," says M. Soulavie, "and the versatility of his decisions, have been in the course of these memoirs sufficiently evinced. We have seen that monarch adopting the advice of M. Necker, to unite the three orders into one assembly; the same day he listens to the counsels of the queen's party, and resolves upon the distinction of the assemblies. He again exiles M. Necker and again recalls him. He issues orders to the Champ de Mars favourable to his military force, in consequence of the decisions of the palace of Marli, which the duke of Liancourt on the following night annihilates. This wavering and uncertain disposition of Louis XVI. was the primary cause of the fall, both

of the ancient and of the constitutional monarchy ; a similar policy ruined the last of the Valois*.”

On the capture of the Bastile on the memorable 14th of July, 1789, the king professed, and fatally for himself and the nation, only professed, to change the whole course of his policy. “ When the baron de Breteuil,” says M. Bertrand, “ left Versailles at the period of M. Necker’s recall, he was invested with the power of treating with foreign courts, and of proposing *any* measure in the king’s name, which in his opinion tended to promote the re-establishment of the royal authority.” Had the king been really sincere ; had he not wilfully and deliberately, and in repeated instances, violated every principle of honour and good faith ; what an accumulation of misery and misfortune might have been prevented ; but his conduct was such as to involve both himself and his people in one common ruin. “ Fearing to weaken,” says M. Bertrand de Moleville, “ the manifest nullity of the sanctions which he had been forced to give to all the decrees passed since the outrages of the 5th and 6th of October (1789), the king sanctioned also on the 28th of June (1790), the decrees of the 19th,” viz. those respecting the abolition of the orders of nobility and all feudal institutions ; “ notwithstanding the entreaties of M. Necker, who wished the king not to assent to the decree degrading the nobility, till he had offered his observations to the national assembly.”

But in a letter addressed to the archbishop of Arles, a short time subsequent to this decree (August 26th), the king in a high tone of authority, says, “ Je ne consentirai jamais à dépouiller mon clergé, ma noblesse ; à priver l’un des droits acquis à l’Eglise Gallicane par une antique possession, par les vœux des fideles, par les dons des rois mes ayeux ; à souffrir que l’autre soit dépouillé de tout ce

* Mémoires of Soultavie, vol. vi. p. 358.

qui faisait sa gloire, du prix de ses services, de ses titres, de ces récompenses dues aux vertus civiques et guerrières de la noblesse Française. De belles actions leur avaient mérité des privilèges ; le roi de France doit les leur conserver. Je ne donnerai point ma sanction à des décrets qui les dépouilleraient*.”

It seems therefore, that the king did not consider the sanction he had publicly and formally given to these laws as any sanction at all. He appears still to have entertained ideas the most extravagant, of the grandeur of his power, and he was merely waiting for a favourable opportunity to rescind all that he had said and done in relation to the constitution.

On a solemn and memorable occasion, repairing (February 1790) to the assembly in person, he had renewed in a declaration equally unsolicited and unexpected, his former protestations. “Let us,” said the monarch in a strain of the most insidious hypocrisy, “give ourselves up with good faith to the hopes that we ought to conceive ; continue your labours ; let it be known that your monarch applauds them ; I should have many losses to recount, but I find my happiness in that of the nation ; from the bottom of my heart do I express this sentiment ; I will maintain the constitution with my whole power. May this day, in which your monarch comes to reunite himself to you, effect in like manner the re-union of all.” “How,” exclaims M. de Bouillé, a man distinguished amongst the royalists for honour and capacity, “could he retract such a step, thus voluntarily taken, without that degradation of character, than which a king can incur no greater misfortune ?”

For two years and upwards, M. Breteuil appears to have possessed the highest place in the royal confidence. “I shall,” says the monarch, in a letter to that noble-

man, November 1790, "approve all you do towards accomplishing the great end I have in view, which is the re-establishment of my lawful authority, and the happiness of my people*." During this period political intrigues were incessantly carried on by the French court, and a clandestine and dangerous correspondence maintained with that of Vienna. This was well known, and forcibly remonstrated against by those who were most interested in counteracting these machinations. The plainest truths were spoken in the plainest language, but to those who had ears and would hear not, spoken alas! in vain.

When the insidious project for the visit of St. Cloud was in contemplation in the Easter of 1791, a most spirited expostulatory address to the sovereign appeared in the periodical publication, styled *l'Orateur du Peuple*. "Louis XVI." exclaims this bold and popular censor, "aujourd'hui roi des Français arrête! Ou cours-tu monarque, abusé par des conseils perfides? As-tu bien pesé les suites de ce départ, l'ouvrage de ta femme? Le peuple ignore-t-il que de St. Cloud tu te disposes à partir pour Compeigne, et de-là pour la frontière? Ne savous-nous pas que la bouche des rois fut toujours l'autre du mensonge? Une furie te pousse dans le précipice! Eh bien, si tu pars nous ne voyons plus en toi que Tarquin chassé de Rome."

Had the king of France been a man capable of philosophic reflection, the axiom of the Roman historian might probably have occurred with sufficient force to have restrained his subsequent acts of delirium. "*Regum majestatem difficilius ab summo fastigio, ad medium detrahi, quam a mediis ad ima præcipitari.*"

After the rash and justly suspected attempt to withdraw from Paris to St. Cloud had proved abortive, the king

* Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 85.

† Livy.

once more appeared to adopt a new system, and was even prevailed upon to announce the new constitution in form to the different courts of Europe. Being thereupon congratulated by the president of the assembly in form, for "having thus imposed silence on detractors," he declared himself, "charmed beyond expression at the warmth of esteem which the national assembly had been pleased to express towards him. If they could but read my heart," said he, "they would there see sentiments engraved on it, that would well justify the confidence of the nation. All distrust would be then banished from our bosoms, and we should all be happy." Is there not some ground of excuse for the strong expression that, "the mouth of royalty is the cave of falsehood?" when in less than two short months the king, abandoning his honour and his duty, and putting his crown upon the hazard of a die, ventured, by an instrument under his own hand and seal, to pronounce all his former declarations of no force or validity, as extorted from him in direct opposition to his real sentiments.

From the information of M. Bertrand himself, corroborated by other, and not less decisive evidence*, it appears that in the month of May, 1791, M. le comte Alphonse d'Urfort was dispatched on a secret commission from their most Christian majesties to the emperor, then at Mantua; and in a short time he returned with a declaration signed by his Imperial majesty, containing the outlines of a plan for effecting a counter-revolution, concerted between the courts of Vienna, Madrid, Turin, and Naples; conformably to which, France was to be invaded by the combined forces of these confederate powers, amounting to 100,000 men, at the end of July; and their most Christian majesties are earnestly exhorted, "to em-

* Vide *Memoirs of the Marquis De Bouillé*, and Dr. Moore's *History of the French Revolution*.

ploy every possible means to increase their popularity, in order to take advantage of it when the time should come; and so that the people, alarmed at the approach of the foreign armies, should find their safety only in the king's mediation, and their submission to his majesty's authority. His Imperial majesty entreats their most Christian majesties to drop every idea of procuring their liberty, and adds, that their surest dependence is on the movement of the armies of the allied powers, preceded by menacing manifestoes."

Unfortunately the king and queen, deaf to every suggestion of policy and prudence, from whatever quarter originating, adopted measures equally fatal to themselves and the kingdom.

By the advice of the baron de Breteuil, an attempt was made by their majesties, notwithstanding the dissuaves of the emperor, to effect their escape to Montmedi; a project no less absurd in the design than unsuccessful in the execution, and mischievous in the consequences. Sensible by dear bought experience, of the false step he had taken, the king gradually withdrew his confidence from the baron, but unhappily without transferring his favour to those who were more deserving of it. From this fatal era, the republican party became every day more daring and formidable. The king having declared in the paper which he left behind him, all his oaths and promises null and void; it was not possible in the nature of things, that confidence untainted by suspicion should ever again be restored. Sentiments of loyalty and generosity, however, upon the whole prevailed; the apology of the king was received by the assembly with indulgence and even complacency, and in a short time powers were vested in the hands of the monarch, infinitely dangerous both to himself and the nation.

The administration which presided over the affairs of

France from the period of the king's acceptance of the constitution, in the autumn of 1791, to March 1792, was composed of persons, presumed, *with one exception*, to be well affected to the constitution, but apparently devoid of the zeal and vigour necessary to counteract the designs of the court. During this term M. de Montmorin, and afterwards M. de Lessart, were at the head of the foreign department; and M. Cayer de Gerville, of the interior; M. de Narbonne was minister of war, and M. Bertrand de Moleville, of marine; M. Tarbé, of finance, and M. Duport de Tertre, of justice. But of these ministers, M. Bertrand, an open and determined enemy of the constitution, enjoyed incomparably the most credit with the king. A representation from the assembly against him was treated with contempt, while M. Narbonne, who had refused to sit any longer in council with M. Bertrand, was dismissed with disgrace. Both M. de Montmorin and M. de Lessart, were, according to the representations of M. Bertrand, concealed royalists, and absolutely hostile to the new order of things. The other three ministers were men of probity and constitutional principles, who harboured with extreme reluctance any suspicions of the king. M. Gerville in particular, was convinced upon very false grounds, as it now appears, of the rectitude of the king's intentions; but the queen he regarded, M. Bertrand tells us, "as a haughty, perfidious, and wicked woman, who thought of nothing but re-establishing despotism;" and his idea of her majesty was such, that when the ministerial committee was held in the palace, he never would speak with freedom, from a notion that the queen, or some of her spies, listened at the door, or behind the wainscot.

During the whole of this period, the king was incessantly engaged in designs no less dangerous to himself than inimical to the new constitution. In the month of December 1791, Louis XVI. wrote with his own hand

a letter to the king of Prussia, thanking him for the interest which that monarch had expressed, not only for his person, but for the welfare of his kingdom. "Je viens," says he, "de m'adresser à l'empereur, à l'impératrice de Russie, aux rois d'Espagne et de Suede, et je leur présente l'idée d'un congrès des principales puissances de l'Europe, appui d'une force armée comme la meilleure mesure pour arrêter ici les factieux, donner les moyens d'établir un ordre de choses plus désirables, et empêcher que le mal qui nous travaille puisse gagner les autres états de l'Europe. J'espère que votre majesté approuvera mes idées, et qu'elle me gardera le secret le plus absolu sur la démarche que je fais, auprès d'elle. Elle sentira aisément que les circonstances où je me trouve, m'obligent à la plus grande circonspection ; c'est ce qui fait, qu'il n'y a que le baron de Breteuil qui soit instruit de mon secret ; et votre majesté peut lui faire passer ce qu'elle voudra *."

But even those who were most willing and desirous to believe that the king did not entertain any fixed or regularly formed design of subverting the constitution, could not but acknowledge that he obstinately withheld his support and confidence from those who were most zealously attached to it. Instead of cultivating a good understanding with the assembly by an open and steady course of action, he had recourse to the vile arts of corruption and bribery, to lessen the weight of the opposition against the court ; and vast sums were expended, to no other purpose than to make the government contemptible and odious. "During the first assembly," said the king to M. Bertrand, "the attempt to gain the tribunes cost the civil list more than three millions, and the tribunes were constantly against me notwithstanding."

In the spring of 1792, the public discontents ran so high, that the king was compelled to make an entire

* Correspondence of Louis XVI.

change of administration, and to replace his former ministers with another set of men, upon whose zeal, vigour, and ability the nation relied with perfect security. The new administration consisted of M. Dumourier for the foreign, and M. Roland the interior department, M. Servan minister of war, and M. de la Costé of marine, M. Clavieres of finance, and M. Duranton garde des sceaux, or minister of justice—men whose counsels might, if the infatuation of the monarch had permitted, still have availed to save the king and country from ruin. By the party of the royalists this administration was most invidiously and unjustly branded with the stigma of jacobinism. For M. Dumourier himself tells us, in his *Memoirs*, “that neither La Costé or Duranton were ever members of the jacobin society. Dumourier, Roland, and Clavieres, were three very studious and laborious men, who lived at home, assisted but very seldom at the debates of this club previously to their entrance into the administration; never afterwards; and who considered it as a dangerous assembly, which it was necessary either to suppress, or to lull asleep.”

In the month of April, the fatal war which for so many years desolated Europe, commenced, after an atrocious series of provocations on the part of Austria, and a long and unexampled forbearance on that of France; so that upon which of the two nations the heavy charge of aggression rested, was abundantly manifest to every impartial and dispassionate person.

When the combined armies were on the point of invading France, M. Bertrand, as he himself informs us, counselled the king to send off M. Mallet du Pan with secret dispatches for the baron de Breteuil, and directions how to act. This the king with marks of emotion refused, saying, “it was he that prompted us to take that accursed journey to Varennes.” In the stead of M. Breteuil, therefore, the letters were addressed to the marechal

de Castries, advising that the entrance of the Austrians and Prussians into France should be preceded by a manifesto, in which they should declare, "that forced to take arms against an unjust attack, they did not impute that aggression either to the king, or the French nation, but to a criminal faction which oppressed both. Consequently, far from departing from the sentiments of amity which united them to France, that their intention, on the contrary, was to deliver that nation from tyranny, and to restore it to legal order and tranquillity. That their majesties the emperor, and king, took all peaceable and faithful subjects under their protection; that they considered as their enemies those only who were the enemies of France, namely, the faction of the jacobins and all its adherents." This advice, as appears by referring to the proclamation of the duke of Brunswick, was strictly conformed to; and from M. Bertrand we learn, that the king of France entertained the firmest assurance of the success of the duke of Brunswick's expedition, though his personal situation filled him with alarming apprehensions.

But exclusive of the irrefragable evidence recently produced, in consequence of the publications of Dumourier, de Bouillé, Bertrand de Moleville, madame Roland, &c. the treachery of the king might, at the period when the Austrian and Prussian armies entered France, be without hesitation inferred from the general tenor of his conduct since the period of his acceptance of the constitution; from his systematic abuse of the *veto*; from the defenceless state of the kingdom, and more especially of the principal fortresses on the German frontier; from the recall of marechal Luckner, when in the full career of victory; and the mysterious movements of M. La Fayette, now in close and intimate union with the court. M. Dumourier himself informs us, that he learned on his arrival at Douay, July 1792, that marechal Luckner, after having held a council of war, though there was no enemy to oppose him,

had evacuated Courtray and Menin, and was returning to the camp of Valenciennes. "This shameful retreat," says he, "evidently proceeded from party spirit, in consequence of some great project broached by La Fayette's faction, of which Luckner, beset by his own staff-officers, was at once the instrument and the dupe."

It did not escape the notice of the military men in the assembly, that M. Fayette had drawn back his army from Longwy to Sedan, on the approach of the duke of Brunswick's forces; whereas, he ought, as they affirmed, to have retired towards Verdun, and crossing the Meuse, have occupied the camp of Sivry-la-Perche, a very strong position, securing a safe retreat to the Gorge of Clermont, instead of which, by turning aside to Sedan, he left the route open to Paris*.

From the general complexion of M. La Fayette's conduct and character, it cannot indeed be supposed that his views extended farther than to support the constitutional monarchy, in opposition to the rising spirit of jacobinism, and republicanism, and so egregiously was he imposed upon by the artifices of the court, as to entertain the extravagant belief, that the invaders of France were actuated by the same moderate and patriotic motives. But subsequent events have no doubt fully convinced that respectable but mistaken man, that if the dark designs at this time in agitation, had ultimately proved successful, he would have fallen the first victim of his own credulity and folly.

For a short interval after the appointment of the patriotic ministers, Roland, Servan, and Clavieres, as madame Roland informs us, they were almost persuaded of the sincerity of the monarch, who appeared so anxious to inspire them with confidence, that Roland declared, "if the king was not an honest man, he was the most arrant

* Vide Major Money's Memoirs of the Campaign, A. D. 1792.

cheat in the kingdom ;" adding " dissimulation can hardly go so far." But they were soon convinced that they were in a fatal error. At times, indeed, they thought that the king appeared impressed with the force of their reasonings : but at the subsequent meeting of council he was hardened into resistance ; and the same round of argument was urged with ceaseless and unavailing solicitude. Servan had the boldness to declare to the king, " that his weakness was criminal, and would never be a shield against the indignation of his people." No register of the transactions and deliberations of the council, was permitted by the king, nor any secretary allowed, although expressly enjoined by the constitution, and repeatedly insisted upon by the ministers. " Want of ability," says madame Roland, " had disabled him from preventing the establishment of the new government ; but honesty alone would have been sufficient to have saved him, if he had been sincere in executing, when he had accepted the constitution. Unhappily for himself, with one hand to support what he was overthrowing with the other, was his crooked policy ; and this perfidious conduct first excited mistrust, and finished by kindling general indignation."

After the dismissal of this wise and popular administration, the monarch appears to have been guided by no fixed principle of action. The resolution suddenly taken to discard the late ministers, proceeded not from any concerted plan of policy, but from the mere impulse of pride and passion. He could not endure the language of sincerity and truth. Even yet he was the arbiter of his own fate. M. Bertrand himself admits, that at this period, the faction of the Gironde, though undoubtedly republican in speculation, harboured no design of subverting the constitution ; and a letter was at this critical and decisive moment transmitted to the king, signed by Vergniaud, Guadet, and Gensonné, three chiefs of the party, stating the terrible consequences likely to ensue, and pledging

themselves for the security of the public peace, in the event of the restoration of the Gironde administration. This letter produced not the least permanent effect. On the 27th July, writing to the count de Provence, the monarch declares that he had just been giving audience to M. Vergniaud, the most distinguished leader of that popular and powerful connexion.—“ Je vous avoue,” says he, “ que ses raisons m’ont frappé ; il a du talent, l’éloquence de l’ame, de la facilité, beaucoup d’énergie.—Il m’a parlé des vastes projets conçues par des êtres mal intentionnés. Il m’a assuré que les jacobins dans leurs écrits, dans leurs clubs, ne se contentaient pas de demander la déchéance, mais qu’ils avaient engagé plusieurs de leurs meneurs à la demander à la tribune du corps législatif. Il m’a conseillé de flatter la Gironde et de hâter sa réunion avec le côté droit, par des moyens qu’il veut m’indiquer.”

Though he confesses that the party opposed to the Girondists strikes him with horror, he concludes by declaring, “ that the propositions made to him by the latter, shall not be accepted.” “ Voyons,” says this infatuated monarch, “ si l’audace des factieux triomphera.” Assuredly nothing short of a miracle could save a man so obstinately bent upon his own destruction! equally devoid of energy and of judgment, he waited with impatience for the approaching time, when by the intervention of a foreign and military force, that new order of things which he had repeatedly and solemnly sworn to defend, should be completely overturned. The edifice of the constitution was indeed destroyed, but the monarch was at the same time, as might easily be foreseen, crushed under its ruins.

To affirm that the oaths of the king of France were of no validity, as being the effect of coercion, must tend to dissolve all moral obligation. Louis XVI. was no otherwise under coercion at Paris, when he swore to maintain

the constitution of 1790, than the glorious and immortal deliverer of Great Britain, king William III. in submitting to the oath tendered to him at Westminster, in 1689. He could not be king if he refused it; and the eventual violation of such oath, must necessarily at the same instant dissolve and nullify the bond of allegiance. In neither country was the monarch constitutionally subject, in the regular course of government, to personal responsibility; but if the functions of sovereignty were perverted to a purpose directly contrary to that which the constitution intended; if, instead of protecting, a design was evidently formed for subverting the constitution, the monarch could not in equity claim the benefit of those established rules and maxims of government in his own favour, which might operate to the detriment, or perhaps to the ruin, of those for whose sake all government is instituted.

All the feelings and sympathies of our nature, are nevertheless awakened, when Louis XVI. a monarch possessing undoubtedly many virtues, such indeed as were chiefly calculated to blossom in the shade, presents himself to our imagination as a prisoner at the bar, and much more as a prisoner on the scaffold. But the French nation themselves, through the medium of their representatives, were the legitimate and only competent judges, how far the safety of their country demanded by an imperious and terrible necessity, so signal and melancholy a sacrifice. And however we may dissolve in tears of compassion over the victim, we can arrogate no right to brand it as an act of national injustice. That there were men in that assembly which passed sentence of condemnation on the king, of the most flagitious and unprincipled ambition, who under pretext of patriotism, sought only for occasions to carry into effect their own black and nefarious designs, can in no degree invalidate the truth of the facts here stated, or of the conclusions deducible from them. There were others, who were as certainly actuated

by an high sense of duty, who sealed his doom with a bleeding heart; and who would with pleasure have devoted their lives for their sovereign, had they considered him as the protector and guardian of the constitution which he had sworn to defend, instead of a traitor and an hypocrite justly accused of conspiring its destruction.

How incalculable would have been the difference in favour of the interests of liberty, peace, and happiness, had England accepted with magnanimous cordiality, the overtures of amity made by France, through the medium of her patriot ministers, in the spring of 1792; and had frankly and generously offered her guarantee of the constitution, as ratified by the king, whose sincerity was at that moment, if ever, to be confided in. Saturnian times might then have rolled round again. But such wisdom in such circumstances, perhaps, is not given to man; certainly not to such men as then ruled the councils of this country.



MEMORIAL OF LORD AUCKLAND TO THE STATES-GENERAL,

JANUARY 25, 1793.

HIGH AND MIGHTY LORDS,

THE undersigned ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic majesty, in consequence of express orders which he received from the king, has the honour to lay before your high mightinesses, copies of all the papers which have been exchanged from the 27th December last to the 20th of this month, between lord Grenville, secretary of state of his Britannic majesty, and M. Chauvelin.

High and mighty lords, the king is fully persuaded

that the sentiments and principles expressed in the name of Great Britain, are perfectly the same with those which animate your republic, and that your high mightinesses are disposed to concur fully in the measures which the present important crisis calls for, and which are the necessary consequences of those sentiments and principles.

The circumstances which brought us to that crisis, are too recent, and the conduct of the king too well known, to oblige the undersigned to enter into superfluous details.

Not four years ago, some wretches assuming the title of philosophers, had the presumption to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize that dream of their vanity, they found it necessary to overthrow and destroy all received notions of subordination, manners, and religion, which have hitherto formed all the security, happiness, and consolation of the human race. Their destructive projects have but too well succeeded. But the effects of the new system which they endeavoured to introduce, served only to shew the imbecility and villany of its authors. The events which so rapidly followed each other since that epoch, surpass in atrocity all which had ever polluted the pages of history. Property, liberty, security, even life itself, have been deemed playthings in the hands of infamous men, who are slaves of the most licentious passions of rapine, enmity, and ambition.

The annals of mankind present no epoch, when and in so short a time, so many crimes were committed, so many misfortunes caused, and so many tears shed. Even at this moment, these horrors seem to be at their height,

During all that time, the king, surrounded by his people, who by Divine Providence enjoy an unexampled prosperity, could not look on the misfortunes of others, but with a sentiment of indignation and pity; but faithful to his principles, his majesty never wished to interfere with

the interior affairs of foreign nations ; he never deviated from the path of neutrality which he had prescribed to himself. This conduct, which the king with pleasure saw observed likewise by your high mightinesses, and the good faith of which all Europe acknowledged, together with his peaceable disposition, which ought to have been respected on every ground, was not sufficient to secure his majesty, his loyal subjects, and this republic, from the most dangerous and criminal plots.

For several months past, ambitious projects of aggrandizement, alarming to the tranquillity and safety of all Europe, were planned in the most public manner ; endeavours were made to spread in the interior parts of England, and of this country, maxims detrimental to all social order ; they were not even ashamed to call these horrible attempts revolutionary power.

Ancient and solemn treaties guaranteed by the king were infringed, and the rights and the territory of the republic have been violated. His majesty, therefore, in his wisdom, thought proper to make such warlike preparations, as seemed to him proportioned to the circumstances of the times. The king has consulted his parliament, and the measures which his majesty thought fit to adopt, were approved by the spirited and unanimous consent of a people who abhor anarchy and irreligion, and love their king and constitution.

Such are, high and mighty lords, the motives of a conduct, the wisdom and equity of which, have till now ensured to the king your concurrence and co-operation. His majesty has in every respect constantly kept a watchful eye on the support of the rights and safety of the United Provinces. The declaration which the undersigned had the honour to make to your high mightinesses on the 13th November last, and the arrival of a small squadron destined for the protection of the shores of the republic, during the time when its own naval forces were

assembling, prove it incontestibly. Your high mightinesses have acknowledged these dispositions of his majesty in what he has done already. You will not find them abated in the preparations that are now making: in consequence of which, his majesty is persuaded, that he will continue to experience on the part of your high mightinesses, a perfect conformity of principles and conduct: that conformity can alone give to the united efforts of the two countries, the necessary energy for their common defence, which will also oppose a barrier to the evils with which Europe is threatened, and secure from every attempt, the safety, tranquillity, and independence of a state, the happiness of which is ensured by your high mightinesses, through the wisdom and energy of its government.

Done at the Hague, January 25, 1793.

AUCKLAND.

ADDRESS MOVED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

FEBRUARY 21, 1793.

THAT the sentiments of the members in opposition, upon the conduct of ministers, and the causes of the war, might remain yet more fully and explicitly upon parliamentary record, Mr. Grey, on the 21st of February, 1793, moved the following well-weighed, judicious, and comprehensive address to his majesty.

“ That an humble address be presented to his majesty, to assure his majesty, that his faithful commons, animated by a sincere and dutiful attachment to his person and family, and to the excellent constitution of this kingdom, as well as by an ardent zeal for the honour and interest of the nation, will at all times be ready to support his majesty in any measures which a due observance of the faith of treaties, the dignity of his crown, or the security of his dominions, may compel him to undertake.

“ That feeling the most earnest solicitude to avert from our country the calamities of war, by every means consistent with honour and with safety, we expressed to his majesty at the opening of the present sessions, ‘ our sense of the temper and prudence which had induced his majesty to observe a strict neutrality with respect to the war on the continent, and uniformly to abstain from any interference in the internal affairs of France,’ and our hope that the steps his majesty had taken would have the happy tendency ‘ to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace.’

“ That with the deepest concern we now find ourselves obliged to relinquish that hope, without any evidence having been produced, to satisfy us that his majesty’s ministers have made such efforts as it was their duty to make, and as by his majesty’s most gracious speech we were taught to expect, for the preservation of peace. It is no less the resolution than the duty of his majesty’s faithful commons, to second his efforts in the war thus fatally commenced, so long as it shall continue; but we deem it a duty equally incumbent upon us, to solicit his majesty’s attention to those reasons or pretexts by which his servants have laboured to justify a conduct on their part, which we cannot but consider as having contributed in a great measure to produce the present rupture.

“ Various grounds of hostility against France have been stated, but none that appeared to us to have constituted such an urgent and imperious case of necessity as left no room for accommodation, and made war unavoidable. The government of France has been accused of having violated the law of nations, and the stipulations of existing treaties, by an attempt to deprive the republic of the United Provinces of the exclusive navigation of the Scheld. No evidence, however, has been offered to con-

vince us that this exclusive navigation was either in itself, or in the estimation of those who were alone interested in preserving it, of such importance, as to justify a determination in our government to break with France on that account. If in fact, the States-general had shewn a disposition to defend their right by force of arms, it might have been an instance of the truest friendship to have suggested to them for their serious consideration, how far the assertion of this unprofitable claim might, in the present circumstances of Europe, tend to bring into hazard the most essential interests of the republic. But when, on the contrary, it has been acknowledged, that no requisition on this subject was made to his majesty on the part of the States-general, we are at a loss to comprehend on what grounds of right or propriety we take the lead in asserting a claim in which we are not principals, and in which the principal party has not, as far as we know, thought it prudent or necessary to call for our interposition.

“ We must further remark, that the point in dispute seemed to us to have been relieved from a material part of its difficulty, by the declaration of the minister of foreign affairs in France, that the French nation gave up all pretensions to determine the question of the future navigation of the Scheld. Whether the terms of this declaration were perfectly satisfactory or not, they at least left the question open to pacific negotiation, in which the intrinsic value of the object, to any of the parties concerned in it, might have been coolly and impartially weighed against the consequences to which all of them might be exposed, by attempting to maintain it by force of arms.

“ We have been called upon to resist views of conquest and aggrandizement, entertained by the government of France, “ at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but asserted to be peculiarly so when connected with the propagation of principles which lead

to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civil society."

"We admit, that it is the interest and duty of every member of the commonwealth of Europe, to support the established system and distribution of power among the independent sovereignties which actually subsist, and to prevent the aggrandizement of any state, especially the most powerful, at the expence of any other; and for the honour of his majesty's councils, we do most earnestly wish that his ministers had manifested a just sense of the importance of the principle to which they now appeal, in the course of late events, which seemed to us to threaten its entire destruction.

"When Poland was beginning to recover from the long calamities of anarchy, combined with oppression; after she had established an hereditary and limited monarchy like our own, and was peaceably employed in settling her internal government, his majesty's ministers, with apparent indifference and unconcern, have seen her become the victim of the most unprovoked and unprincipled invasion; her territory over-run, her free constitution subverted, her national independence annihilated, and the general principles of the security of nations wounded through her side. With all these evils was France soon after threatened; and with the same appearance either of supine indifference, or of secret approbation, his majesty's ministers beheld the armies of other powers, in evident concert with the oppressor of Poland, advancing to the invasion and subjugation of France; and the march of those armies distinguished from the ordinary hostilities of civilized nations by manifestoes, which, if their principles and menaces had been carried into practice, must have inevitably produced the return of that ferocity and barbarism in war, which a beneficent religion and enlightened manners, and true military ho-

now have for a long time banished from the christian world.

“ No effort appears to have been made to check the progress of these invading armies. His majesty’s ministers, under a pretended respect for the rights and independence of other sovereigns, thought fit at that time to refuse even the interposition of his majesty’s councils and good offices, to save so great and important a portion of Europe from falling under the dominion of a foreign power. But no sooner, by an ever-memorable reverse of fortune, had France repulsed her invaders, and carried her arms into their territory, than his majesty’s ministers, laying aside that collusive indifference which had marked their conduct during the invasion of France, began to express alarms for the general security of Europe, which, as it appears to us, they ought to have seriously felt, and might have expressed with greater justice, on the previous successes of her powerful adversaries.

“ We will not dissemble our opinion, that the decree of the national assembly of France, of the 19th November, 1792, was in a great measure liable to the objections urged against it; but we cannot admit, that a war upon the single ground of such a decree, unaccompanied by any overt-acts by which we or our allies might be directly attacked, would be justified as necessary and unavoidable. Certainly not, unless upon a regular demand made by his majesty’s ministers, of explanation and security in behalf of us and our allies, the French had refused to give his majesty such explanation and security. No such demand was made; explanations, it is true, have been received and rejected; but it well deserves to be remarked and remembered, that these explanations were voluntarily offered on the part of France, not previously demanded on ours, as undoubtedly they would have been, if it had suited the views of his majesty’s ministers to have acted frankly and honourably towards France, and not to have

reserved their complaints for a future period, when explanations, however reasonable, might come too late, and hostilities might be unavoidable.

“ After a review of all those considerations, we think it necessary to represent to his majesty, that none of the points which were in dispute between his ministers and the government of France, appear to us to have been incapable of being adjusted by negotiation, except that aggravation of French ambition which has been stated to arise from the political opinions of the French nation. These indeed we conceive formed neither any definable object of negotiation, nor any intelligible reason for hostility. They were equally incapable of being adjusted by treaty, or of being either refuted or confirmed by the events of war.

“ We need not state to his majesty’s wisdom, that force can never cure delusion; and we know his majesty’s goodness too well, to suppose that he could ever entertain the idea of employing force to destroy opinions, by the extirpation of those who hold them.

“ The grounds upon which his majesty’s ministers have advised him to refuse the renewal of some avowed public intercourse with the existing government of France, appeared to us neither justified by the reason of the thing itself, nor by the usage of nations, nor by any expediency arising from the present state of circumstances. In all negotiations or discussions whatsoever, of which peace is the real object, the appearance of an amicable disposition, and of a readiness to offer and to accept of pacific explanations on both sides, is as necessary and useful to ensure success, as an argument founded on strict right. Nor can it be denied, that claims or arguments of any kind, urged in hostile or haughty language, however equitable or valid in themselves, are more likely to provoke than to conciliate the opposite party. Deploring, as we have ever done, the melancholy event which has lately hap-

pened in France, it would yet have been some consolation to us to have heard, that the powerful interposition of the British nation on this subject had at least been offered, although it should unfortunately have been rejected. But instead of receiving such consolation from the conduct of his majesty's ministers, we have seen them, with extreme astonishment, employing as an incentive to hostilities, an event which they had made no effort to avert by negotiation. This inaction they could only excuse on the principle, that the internal conduct of nations, whatever may be our opinion of its morality, was no proper ground for interposition and remonstrance from foreign states—a principle from which it must still more clearly follow, that such internal conduct could never be an admissible justifying reason for war.

“ We cannot refrain from observing, that such frequent allusions as have been made to an event confessedly no ground of rupture, seemed to us to have arisen from a sinister intention to derive from the humanity of Englishmen, popularity for measures which their deliberate judgment would have reprobated, and to influence the most virtuous sensibilities of his majesty's people, into a blind and furious zeal for a war of vengeance.

“ His majesty's faithful commons therefore, though always determined to support his majesty with vigour and cordiality in the exertions necessary for the defence of his kingdoms, yet feel that they are equally bound by their duty to his majesty, and to their fellow-subjects, to declare in the most solemn manner, their disapprobation of the conduct of his majesty's ministers throughout the whole of these transactions; a conduct which, in their opinion, could lead to no other termination but that to which it seems to have been studiously directed, of plunging this country into an unnecessary war. The calamities of such a war must be aggravated in the estimation of every rational mind, by reflecting on the peculiar advan-

tages of that fortunate situation which we have so unwisely abandoned, and which not only exempted us from sharing in the distresses and afflictions of the other nations of Europe, but converted them into sources of benefit, improvement, and prosperity to this country.

“ We therefore humbly implore his majesty’s paternal goodness, to listen no longer to the councils which have forced us into this unhappy war, but to embrace the earliest occasion which his wisdom may discern, of restoring to his people the blessings of peace.”

Mr. Pitt declaring in a few words, that it was unnecessary to enter upon any new discussion relative to the grounds and reasons of the war, upon the present occasion, the question was put upon the motion of Mr. Grey, and the address, framed, as it must appear in the view of posterity to be, in the true and genuine spirit of political wisdom, was negatived without a division.

MEMORIAL PRESENTED BY THE BRITISH AND IMPERIAL MINISTERS, TO THE STATES-GENERAL OF THE UNITED PROVINCES,

APRIL 5, 1793.

HIGH AND MIGHTY LORDS,

It is known, that towards the month of September, last year, his Britannic majesty and your high mightinesses gave, in concert, a solemn assurance, that in case the imminent danger which then threatened the lives of their most Christian majesties and their families, should be realized, his majesty and your high mightinesses would not fail to pursue the most efficacious measures to prevent the persons who might render themselves guilty of so atrocious a crime, from finding any asylum in your respective states. This event, which was with horror foreseen,

has taken place, and the divine vengeance seems not to have been tardy. Some of these detestable regicides are now in such a situation that they can be subjected to the sword of the law. The rest are still in the midst of a people whom they have plunged into an abyss of evils; and for whom famine, anarchy, and civil war, are about to prepare new calamities. In short, every thing that we see happen, induces us to consider as not far distant, the end of these wretches, whose madness and atrocities have filled with terror and indignation all those who respect the principles of religion, morality, and humanity.

The undersigned therefore submit to the enlightened judgment and wisdom of your high mightinesses, whether it would not be proper to employ all the means in your power, to prohibit from entering your states in Europe, or your colonies, all those members of the pretended national convention, or of the pretended executive council, who have directly or indirectly participated in the said crime; and if they should be discovered and arrested, to deliver them up to justice, that they may serve as a lesson and example to mankind.

Done at the Hague, this 5th April, 1793.

AUCKLAND.

C. DE STAREMBERG.

DECLARATION OF THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN,
RELATIVE TO THE WAR WITH FRANCE,
OCTOBER 29, 1793.

THE circumstances in consequence of which his majesty has found himself engaged in a defensive war against France, are known already to all Europe. The objects which his majesty has proposed to himself from the commencement of the war, are of equal notoriety. To repel an un-

provoked aggression, to contribute to the immediate defence of his allies, to obtain for them, and for himself, a just indemnification, and to provide, as far as circumstances will allow, for the future security of his own subjects, and of all the other nations of Europe:—these are the points for which his majesty has felt it incumbent on him to employ all the means which he derives from the resources of his dominions, from the zeal and affection of his people, and from the unquestionable justice of his cause.

But it has become daily more and more evident, how much the internal situation of France obstructs the conclusion of a solid and permanent treaty, which can alone fulfil his majesty's just and salutary views for the accomplishment of these important objects, and for restoring the general tranquillity of Europe. His majesty sees therefore, with the utmost satisfaction, the prospect which the present circumstances afford him of accelerating the return of peace, by making to the well-disposed part of the people of France a more particular declaration of the principles which animate him, of the objects to which his views are directed, and of the conduct which it is his intention to pursue. With respect to the present situation of affairs, the events of the war, the confidence reposed in him by one of the most considerable cities of France, and above all, the wish which is manifested almost universally in that country, to find a refuge from the tyranny by which it is now overwhelmed, render the explanation on his majesty's part a pressing and indispensable duty; and his majesty feels additional satisfaction in making such a declaration, from the hope of finding in the other powers engaged with him in the common cause, sentiments and views perfectly conformable to his own.

From the first period when his most Christian majesty, Louis XVI. had called his people around him to join in concerting measures for their common happiness, the king

has uniformly shewn by his conduct, the sincerity of his wishes for the success of so difficult, but at the same time so interesting an undertaking. His majesty was deeply afflicted with all the misfortunes which ensued, but particularly when he perceived more and more evidently, that measures, the consequences of which he could not disguise from himself, must finally compel him to relinquish the friendly and pacific system which he had adopted. The moment at length arrived, when his majesty saw that it was necessary for him not only to repel the unjust aggression which he had recently experienced, but that all the dearest interests of his people, imposed upon him a duty still more important—that of his exerting his efforts for the preservation of civil society itself, as happily established among the nations of Europe.

The designs which had been professed, of reforming the abuses of the government of France, of establishing personal liberty, and the rights of property, on a solid foundation, of securing to an extensive and populous country the benefits of a wise legislation, and an equitable and mild administration of its laws—all these salutary views have unfortunately vanished. In their place has succeeded a system destructive of all public order, maintained by proscriptions, exiles, and confiscations, without number; by arbitrary imprisonments, by massacres which cannot even be remembered without horror, and at length by the execrable murder of a just and beneficent sovereign, and of the illustrious princess, who, with an unshaken firmness, has shared all the misfortunes of her royal consort, his protracted sufferings, his cruel captivity, his ignominious death.

The inhabitants of that unfortunate country, so long flattered by promises of happiness, renewed at every fresh crime, have found themselves plunged into an abyss of unexampled calamities; and neighbouring nations, instead of deriving a new security for the maintenance of

general tranquillity, from the establishment of a wise and moderate government, have been exposed to the repeated attacks of a ferocious anarchy, the natural and necessary enemy of all public order. They have had to encounter acts of aggression without pretext, open violations of all treaties, unprovoked declarations of war; in a word, whatever corruption, intrigue, or violence could effect for the purpose, so openly avowed, of subverting all the institutions of society, and of extending over all the nations of Europe that confusion which has produced the misery of France.

This state of things cannot exist in France, without involving all the surrounding powers in one common danger, without giving them the right, without imposing it upon them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil which exists only by this excessive violation of all law, and all property, and which attacks the fundamental principles by which mankind is united in the bonds of civil society. His majesty by no means disputes the right of France to reform its laws. It never would have been his wish to employ the influence of external force with respect to the particular form of government to be established in an independent country. Neither has he now that wish, except in so far as such interference is become essential to the security and repose of other powers.

Under these circumstances, he demands from France, and he demands with justice, the termination of a system of anarchy which has no force but for the purposes of mischief: unable to discharge the primary duty of all government, to repress the disorders, or to punish the crimes which are daily increasing in the interior of the country, but disposing arbitrarily of the property and blood of the inhabitants of France, in order to disturb the tranquillity and blood of other nations, and to render all Europe the theatre of the same crimes, and of the same misfortunes. The king demands that some legitimate and stable

government should be established, founded on the acknowledged principles of universal justice, and capable of maintaining with other powers the accustomed relations of union and peace. His majesty wishes ardently to be enabled to treat for the re-establishment of general tranquillity with such a government, exercising a legal and permanent authority, animated with the wish for general tranquillity, and possessing power to enforce the observance of its engagements. The king would propose none other than equitable and moderate conditions ; not such as the expences, the risque, and the sacrifices of the war might justify, but such as his majesty thinks himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring with a view to these considerations, and still more, to that of his own security, and of the future tranquillity of Europe. His majesty desires nothing more sincerely, than thus to terminate a war which he in vain endeavoured to avoid, and all the calamities of which, as now experienced by France, are to be attributed only to the ambition, the perfidy, and the violence of those whose crimes have involved their own country in misery, and disgraced all civilized nations.

As his majesty has hitherto been compelled to carry on war against the people of France collectively, to treat as enemies all those who suffer their property and blood to be lavished in support of an unjust aggression, his majesty would see with infinite satisfaction, the opportunity of making exceptions in favour of the well disposed inhabitants of the other parts of France, as he has already done with respect to those of Toulon. The king promises on his part the suspension of hostilities, friendship, and, as far as the course of events will allow, or which the will of man can dispose, security and protection, to all those who, by declaring for a monarchical government, shall shake off the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy, of that anarchy which has broken all the most sacred bonds of society, dissolved all the relations of civil life, violated every

right, confounded every duty; which uses the name of liberty to exercise the most cruel tyranny, to annihilate all property, to seize on all possessions; which founds its power on the pretended consent of the people, and itself carries fire and sword through extensive provinces, for having demanded their laws, their religion, and their lawful sovereign.

It is then in order to deliver themselves from this unheard-of oppression, to put an end to a system of unparalleled crimes, and to restore at length tranquillity to France, and security to all Europe, that his majesty invites the co-operation of the people of France. It is for these objects that he calls upon them to join the standard of an hereditary monarchy, not for the purpose of deciding in this moment of disorder, calamity, and public danger, on all the modifications of which this form of government may hereafter be susceptible; but in order to unite themselves once more under the empire of law, of morality, and of religion; and to secure at length to their own country external peace, domestic tranquillity, a real and genuine liberty, a wise, moderate, and beneficent government, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of all the advantages which can contribute to the happiness and prosperity of a great and powerful nation.

This memorable declaration on the part of the king of Great Britain, is framed with extreme art and plausibility, and a great external shew of candour, but, as will appear on an attentive examination, a deep and insidious design. The general tenor of the composition of this paper, considered either in a literary or political view, bears so striking an analogy to the speeches of Mr. Pitt in parliament, that it may without hesitation be ascribed to him as the principal author.

The main question to be resolved is, what at this period

period, and veiled under this pompous parade of moderation, were the real political views of the court of London?

I. A disposition is apparent throughout, to paint in the most odious colours the revolution which had taken place in France, without any discrimination of times or persons, and to represent in the most favourable light, and as a state of great felicity and prosperity, that monarchical despotism under which the French nation had for centuries groaned, and from which a vast majority of that people had so ardently wished to be relieved.

II. The present conventional government is described as dangerous to the peace and order of civilized society, and as of itself not only justifying the confederacy formed for its destruction, but as imposing a duty upon all regular governments to exert their utmost efforts for this end.

III. It is therefore evident, that the restoration of the ancient monarchy of France, was the real end and purpose of the confederacy in which Britain was now engaged; but combined with a plan of dismemberment to an indefinite extent, under the pretext of indemnification for past injuries, and security against future attacks. But in every one of these particulars, either the assertions of the declaration are grossly false, or its reasonings miserably fallacious.

It is, *first*, utterly and palpably false, that "civil society itself was," previous to the revolution in question, "happily established," as the declaration affirms, "among the nations of Europe." On the contrary, with the exceptions of England, Holland, and Switzerland, Europe presented a melancholy view of the most dreadful oppression, blended with, and strengthened by, the most wretched and abject superstition: and France in particular, for near 200 years, had cruelly suffered under the tyranny of a detested race, which she possessed precisely the same right, whenever she acquired the power, to throw off, as Great

Britain to expel the equally odious family of the Stuarts. Nor will it be admitted that Louis XVI., a prince naturally mild and beneficent, but feeble in intellect, corrupted by power, and destitute of sincerity, had voluntarily "called his people around him, to join in concerting measures for their common happiness." This was the effect of an over-ruling political necessity; and from the æra of the establishment of the new constitution, to which he with studied hypocrisy feigned, and on divers occasions solemnly expressed his assent, he was engaged in secretly plotting the means of its subversion. His death, therefore, was not "an execrable murder," but a severe and awful act of national and retributive justice; demanding our sympathy indeed, but not our reproaches, and much less our vengeance.

It is false, *secondly*, that the horrible system actually established in France at this period, though founded on proscription, confiscation, and massacre, was yet incapable of maintaining with other powers, the relations of amity and peace. To say otherwise, is to oppose declamation and invective to fact. It is certain, that with Denmark, Sweden, and America, France had in these circumstances preserved these relations inviolate, and that she had shewn an eager inclination also to maintain, and when broken, to re-establish, the same relations with England: a vicious government not being more willing, unnecessarily, to increase the number of its enemies, than a virtuous one.

Allowing, however, *thirdly*, that England had received injuries from France, justifying hostilities against that power, it is a most fallacious and dangerous conclusion, that from *the very commencement of the war*, England had a right not only to demand the redress of these injuries, but *also* to advance a vague and indefinite claim of indemnification. Should this be admitted as an established rule of national policy, and the secondary claim

of indemnification become thus identified with the original claim of redress, every accidental misunderstanding between two equal powers, must instantly swell into a serious and interminable quarrel. And the probability is, that in carrying on a war for the avowed purpose of indemnification, ten times more will be expended, than the value of the indemnification could be reasonably estimated at, supposing that it were, contrary to the general tenor of experience in similar cases, ultimately obtained.

The prospects held out to the "well disposed" people of France in this declaration, are altogether deceitful and visionary. They are exhorted "to join the standard of an hereditary monarchy, in order to unite themselves once more under the empire of law, of morality, and religion; and to secure to themselves a real and genuine liberty." This is only to be done conformably to the declaration, by an unreserved restoration of the ancient despotism. For they are not permitted previously to deliberate "on the modifications of which this form of government might hereafter be susceptible," and much less assured that those modifications which had been actually and publicly assented to by the late monarch, would be made the basis of the future government. But were the ancient monarchy once re-established, can credulity itself believe, that any gratuitous modifications of that government would be the subsequent result? or rather that the most barbarous vengeance would not be exercised upon all those who were principally concerned in its overthrow?—as was already proved indeed to demonstration, by the treatment which La Fayette and his unfortunate companions had met with from the Prussian and Austrian courts.

With respect to the nature of the indemnifications themselves, claimed at this very early period of the war by the court of London, in the name of the confederate powers, the assurances held out are to the last degree

futile and fallacious. “The objects of his Britannic majesty,” this declaration says, “are to obtain for himself and his allies, a just indemnification, and to provide, as far as circumstances will allow, for the future security of his own subjects, and of all the other nations of Europe.” And again—“The king would propose none other than equitable and moderate conditions; not such as the expenses, the risque and the sacrifices of the war might justify, but such as his majesty thinks himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring with a view to these considerations, and still more, to that of his own security, and of the future tranquillity of Europe.” Now what these ends and purposes would require, not admitting of a distinct specification, must of course be left to the tried equity and justice of those persons—the great and good allies of Britain;—she herself being as far removed from the suspicion of selfish and inordinate ambition, as the EAST is from the WEST—of those very persons, it is necessary to repeat, who had a few years since divested Poland of her fairest provinces, and who were at this very moment, after destroying the dawning hopes of her infant freedom and rising prosperity, with savage and bloody exultation, preparing to blot her name and memory for ever from the map of Europe.

END OF VOL. IX.



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